

Illustrated Life Stories of
Guru Gobind Singh Ji



Dr. Ajit Singh Aulakh

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GURU GOBIND SINGH JI



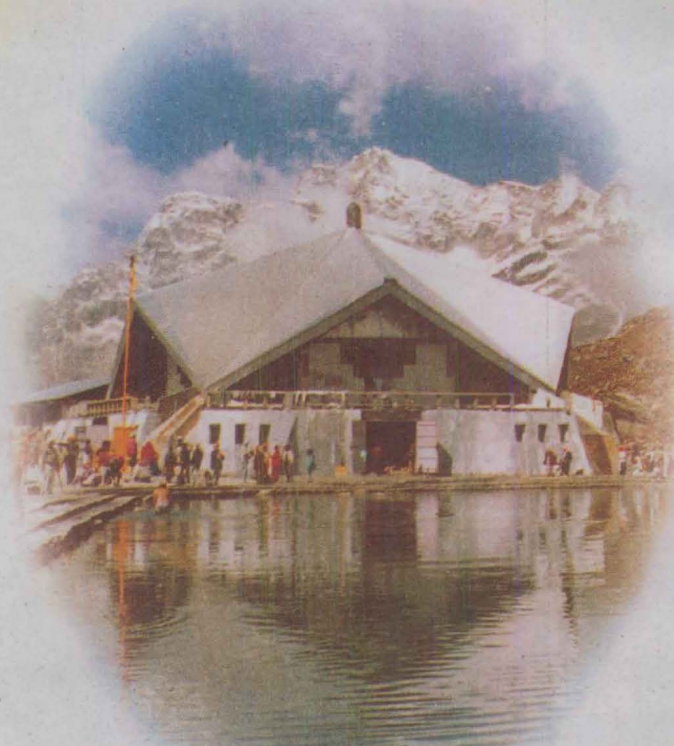
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Amritsar

Illustrated Stories From the Life of
GURU GOBIND SINGH JI

Gurdwara Sri Hemkunt Sahib



ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹੇਮਕੁੰਟ ਸਾਹਿਬ

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HEMKUNT

Guru Gobind Singh, our Tenth Guru is the founder of the Khalsa Panth. He is the first prophet ever born who had written his own autobiography. This autobiography known as Bachittar Natak is written in poetry. In this book the Guru had also written some accounts of his previous birth. He wrote that in his previous birth he contemplated on the Name of God sitting in the lap of Mount Everest, where seven peaks of the mountain were reflecting a very beautiful background. There he worshipped the God for a very long time. He was so much engrossed in contemplation that he achieved the everlasting fulfillment.

The place where the Guru worshipped God, is called Hemkunt. According to the description given in the Bachittar Natak, the Sikhs have traced that place. Now this place has become a very pious pilgrim place for the Sikhs. A beautiful Gurdwara has been built at the place of his worship. There also exists a natural tank near by, whose water is very pure and cold.

Now a *pacca* road leads to the Hemkunt. In the way many Gurdwaras has been constructed to guide and help the pilgrims. Millions of pilgrims visit the Hemkunt in the months of July and August every year.

At Hemkunt, Guru ji was instructed by God to go to world to spread. His name and to uplift the poors irrespective of caste, cread or sect.

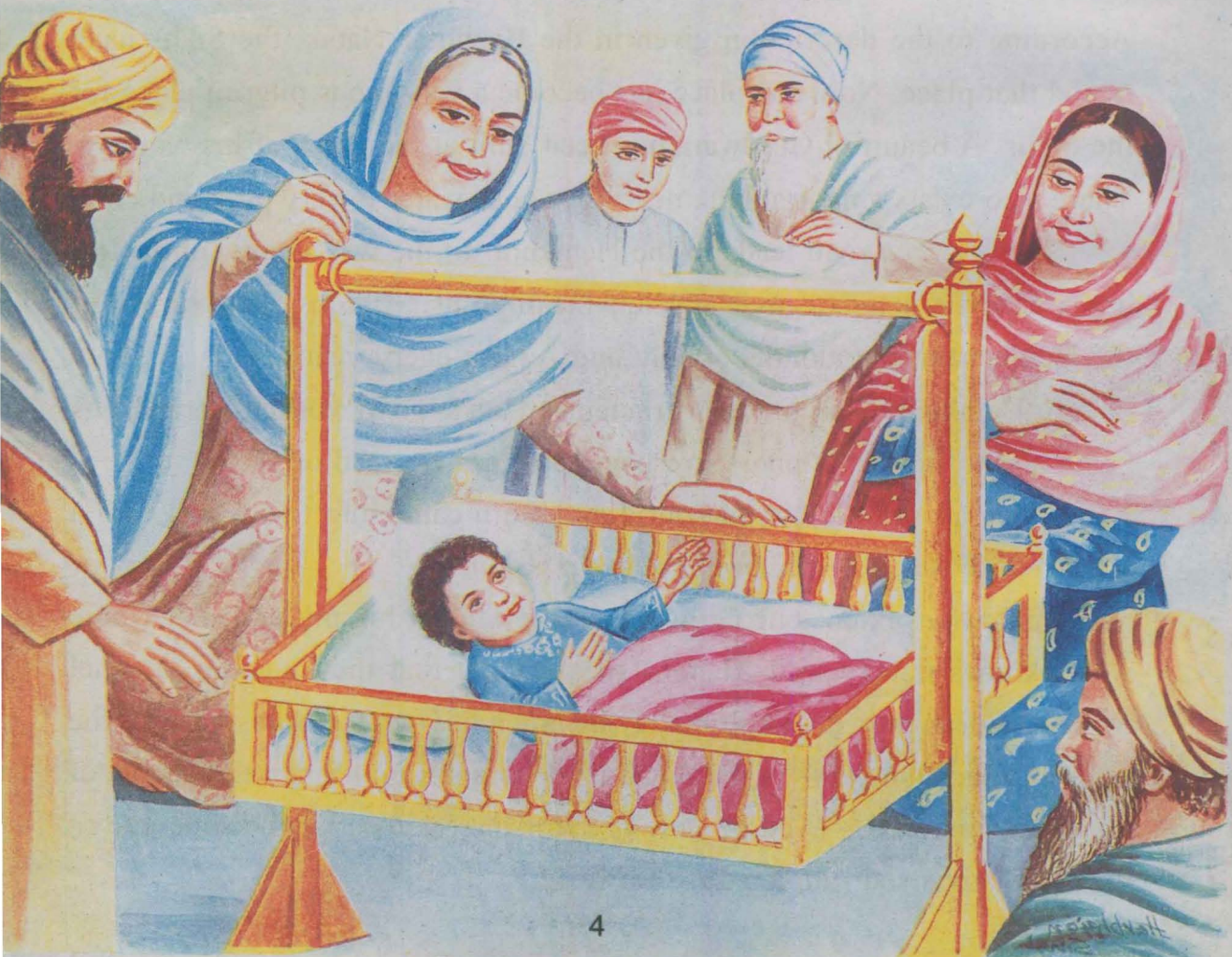
So we all must know that our Tenth Guru came into this world with a special purpose and with an important mission.

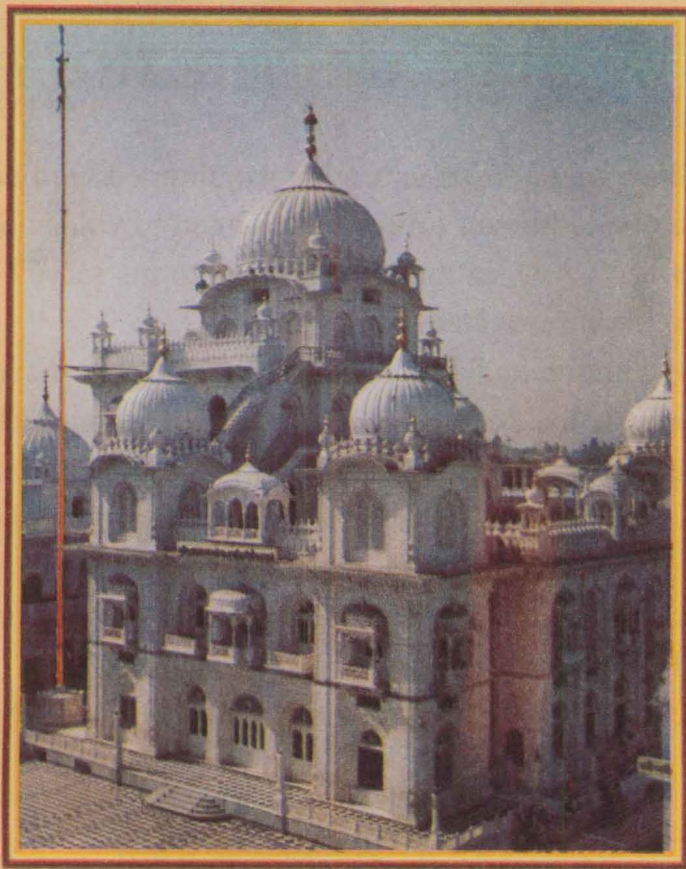
Upto what extent our Guru was successful in his mission, the whole world knows it very well. History speaks itself that the kingdom of cruel Mughal was shattered and ultimately by grace of God, the Sikhs became the ruler of their homeland. In the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh the people of all castes and creeds lived peacefully. Now the Sikhism has become one of the most advanced religions of the world.

BORN AT PATNA

In his previous birth, Guru was absorbed in the Name of God. At that time India's honour was at his lowest ebb. The people were groaning under pain and humiliation. The Mughal rulers were trying their best to convert Hindus to Islam. Those who were not accepting the orders of the rulers were tortured in most cruel manners. God Himself was feeling ashamed of such acts of cruelty. So God decided to send a Great man into the world. That great man, who was ordered to take birth in India, was our Tenth Guru.

He made a new history. He fought the forces of evil and bigotry in





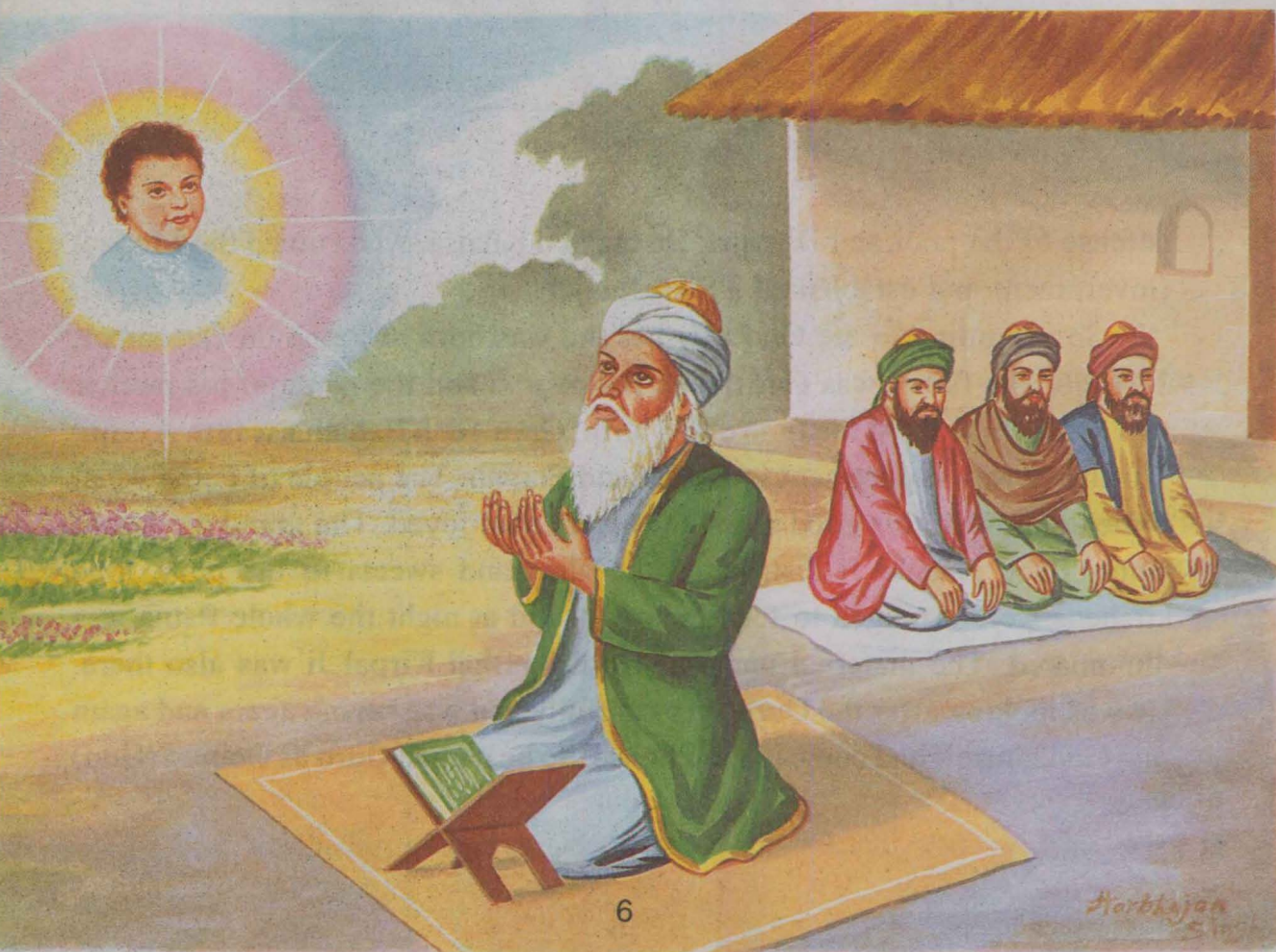
defense of the poor and Dharma. He created Khalsa, who ruined the Mughal Government and established a Sikh Raaj.

So according to the God's wishes, he was born at Patna on December, 22, 1666. His father was Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and the name of his mother was Mata Gujri Ji. At the time of his birth, Guru Tegh Bahadur was in Assam. This news was at once sent to Assam and Punjab. The people of Patna when came to know of this good news, they were overjoyed. The grand mother of Guru, Bebe Nanaki Ji distributed the alms and sweets to the poor. Free kitchens were arranged to feed the poor and at night the whole Patna was illuminated. The maternal uncle of Guru ji, Bhai Kirpal Ji was also there. He was looking after the Guru very carefully and was saying again and again that God himself had come in their house. So he named Guru as Gobind (God) Rae.

BHIKHAN SHAH AND THE HOLY CHILD

Bhikhan Shah was a great saint. He worshipped God so much that he himself became god in human form. He belonged to village Siana in Punjab. He was born in 1637 A.D. in that village. Due to his sacred life, the people of the area loved and respected him.

Millions of Hindus and Muslims had become his disciples, who ever came to pay homage to 'Peer', was rewarded according to his desire. Peer ji always advised his disciples saying, "God is the only Supreme Being ; He is inaccessible and limitless. He is beyond form, feature and colour. Though His forms and colours are different and various but He always remains one Allah. God himself is ultimate silence and He himself is performer of his wonders. All happens according to the wishes of God. He is present everywhere. He is not cruel, but gracious to all. He is treasure of all virtues.





He is the Lord of this world and the next world. Creating His creation Himself He has infused his might into it. He is embodiment of bliss and all joys lie with Him. All His doings are purest of the pure and nothing is without Him”.

His teaching influenced all categories of the people. He was a Christ for the down trodden people. He was helping them mentally as well as economically.

One day when he was absorbed in his meditation, he saw a beam of light and image of a new born child. He atonce realized and perceived that a great man had come to this world. On seeing the Divine light, he bowed towards east, instead of bowing towards west. His surprised disciples asked him the reason of his bowing towards east. He told them that a beloved of God had been born at Patna. He also told that he had decided to have a glimpse of that child.

Taking with him few disciples, he set out for Patna. Walking on foot for hundreds of miles, he reached Patna. He located the Guru's house without much difficulty. When members of the house asked him the purpose of his visit, he told them that he wanted to have a glimpse of the holy child. At that time uncle Kirpal Chand, mother Gujri and grand mother Nanaki were present in the house. They brought the child with great affection. On seeing the child, 'Peer' Bikhan Shah bowed to him in deep reverence and placed before him two earthen pots containing sweets. One earthen pot was bought from a Hindu sweet maker while the other from a Muslim sweet maker. To the amazement of all the holy child placed his right hand on one pot and left hand on the other pot. Then the child smiled and looked at the 'Peer'. At this Bikhan Shah once again bowed and touched the feet of the child. 'Peer's disciples as well as the members of the family asked him to explain the riddle of the earthen pots. 'Peer' said, "I wanted to know whether this God in human form will favour the Hindus or Muslims. With this doubt in my mind I placed Hindus pot and Muslims pot before him. Now he has placed his both hands on these two pots. So he has answered my question that both Hindus and Muslims will be equally dear to him. This child will fight against tyranny, irrespective of caste or creed. So I advise my disciples and others to bow and touch the feet of the holy child." The disciples of 'Peer' bowed before the Child Guru. The Guru blessed them with an amazing smile. Mother Gujri, grand mother Nanaki and maternal uncle were astonished to see such a smile of little God.

They invited 'Peer' and his disciples in their house. They prepared delicious food and served the 'Peer' and his disciples. When the people of Patna came to know that a holy child has born in their city, they thronged to have a glimpse of the child Guru. All were feeling blessed to see the charming face of the child. Bhai Kirpal Chand asked his servants to serve the food and sweets to all the devotees who were coming to have a glimpse of the child Guru.

CHILDHOOD

The Childhood of the holy child was also very fascinating. He was not an ordinary child. His lovely face attracted all. Every one wanted to play with him. He never cried or wept.

When he was of three or four years of age, he played with the children of his neighbourhood. He would not play ordinary games. Generally he would arrange them into two groups and one group would face the other group just as in a battlefield. All his friends considered him their leader and they obeyed him. One day when he was playing with his friends, a Nawab with his servants happened to pass that way. The servant asked the children to salute the Nawab. But instead of saluting the Nawab, the holy child made faces at the Nawab and ran away with his friends. The servants of Nawab became very angry to see such an act of the children. They ran behind them. But the Nawab was very pleased to see such a brave act of the children. He asked them not



to touch the children as they are considered even greater than kings. Instead of punishing them, we should bow before them.

PANDIT SHIV CHAND

At that time a very respected Pandit was living there. His name was Shiv chand. He used to go to the river Ganga early in the morning and after taking bath, he worshipped the idols of the Thakur. He had determined in his mind that he would see the Almighty. But his worship did not bear any fruit.

One day on the bank of the river when Pandit Shiv Chand was meditating on the idols of Thakur, the holy child Gobind Rae reached there. He saw that Pandit was engrossed in his worship. The holy Guru very carefully and slowly reached near Pandit and placing his mouth near Pandit's ears, cried loudly "Hello Pandit Ji". Pandit was alarmed but when he saw the lovely and smiling





face of the little Guru, he perceived that he had found the God in human form.

After that day, he became great admirer of the Guru. He threw away the idols of the Thakur and started meditating on the Guru. Whenever he meditated, he would have a glimpse of the lovely child. Pandit Shiv Chand daily visited the house of the Guru to pay homage to the Guru. Other Brahmans were calling him a fool as he was bowing his head in front of a child. But Pandit Shiv Chand did not listen to their utterings. He felt very happy in the company of the child. The bank of the river where Guru used to go to see Pandit Shiv Chand is called Gobind Ghaat.

The child Guru also used to swim in the water of the river. He was not afraid of the deep and fast running water. Pandit Shiv Chand used to advise the child not to take risk of swimming in the deep water. But child Guru did not care for that, instead he was asking Pandit to accompany him, while taking bath.

RAJA FATEH CHAND MAINI

Raja Fateh Chand Maini was a rich landlord. He was a owner of the thousands acres land. But God had not gifted them with a child. Raja and Rani always prayed to God to bless them a son.

One day Raja Fateh Chand and his wife went to the river bank to meet Pandit Shiv Chand. They asked him to pray for them to the God, so He might bless them with a son. But Shiv Chand said, "I have seen the God in a child. He is himself God in human form. He possesses all spiritual and worldly powers. Who meditates on him, he fulfills his desires. I advise that you should remember him and certainly you will get inheritor of your vast property."

Then Fateh Chand said, "How can we meditate on child God, when we have not seen him, we always remember God keeping one idol in our mind." Pandit Shiv Chand said, "I will help you to have a glimpse of the child Guru. He is very fond of playing and swimming. A child of five years knows very well how to swim. Sometime we are frightened to see him swimming in the horrible waves of the river, but he swims to shore happily.

One day Raja Fateh Chand and his wife had a glimpse of the wonderful child and from that day they started meditating on the child Guru.

One day the child Guru went to the house of Fateh Chand along with his friends. At that time Raja Fateh Chand and his wife were sitting in meditation. They had closed their eyes and were absorbed in the name of the Guru. Suddenly the child Guru caught Raja's wife with his little and strong hands and sitting in her lap said, "Mother I have come".

On opening her eyes, she saw the lovely face of the Guru and was overwhelmed with joy. They saw that he was not alone, his friends were also sitting near by. Then the child said, "Mother, we are very hungry, give us something to eat".

Rani at once asked the Raja Fateh Chand to bring some sweets and fruits from the bazar, but the child Guru said, "We will not eat sweets and fruits. Give us grams and Purees, which you have cooked".

Then Rani at once brought Purees and grams and handed it to the child



Guru. The Guru took the basket in his hands and distributed these to his friends and also took one Puree and some grams himself. From that day the Raja and Rani became devotees of the child Guru. The Guru and his friends were visiting their house daily. They would play in the garden and helped the gardener in planting the flowers and fruit trees. Fateh Chand and his wife's desire for a son was fulfilled. When the child Guru left Patna for Anandpur Sahib they turned their house into a Gurdwara, which is now called Gurdwara Maini Sangat. In this Gurdwara still Purees and grams are served to the devotees.

It is said that when Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Bhai Mardana visited Patna, they met Salis Rae, the Jeweller. Salis Rae and his servant Adharka became great Sikhs of Guru Nanak Dev. The Guru appointed Salis Rae his preacher. In the time of child Guru Gobind Singh, Adharka's descendants were Gulab

Rae and Gansham Dass and Fateh Chand Maini was descendant of Salis Rae, the jeweller. So these families had great respect for Guru Nanak and his followers. When they heard that Guru Tegh Bahadur was sitting on the holy throne of Guru Nanak Dev, they became his great devotee. As Guru Tegh Bahadur had gone to Dhaka. So on hearing that the child Guru was son of Guru Tegh Bahadur, they became his worshipper and served him with great devotion. As the child was a intuitive, he also perceived that Raja Fateh Chand was an inheritor of Salis Rae. So he also loved that family, he had adopted Sikhism since the first Guru.



NAWAB BROTHERS

In Patna there lived two Nawab brothers Rahim Bakash and Karim Bakash. They were rich land lords and were owner of many villages. They

also owned many business establishments. Once Guru Tegh Bahadur stayed in their garden. The Guru liked this Garden very much, he considered that garden very suitable for meditation. Actually the trees of that garden had withered. But by Guru's grace the tree became green again. Seeing this two brothers became his devotees.

At the birth of child Guru, these two brothers presented many gifts to the Guru. They loved him very much and were coming daily to have glimpse of the prophet. The child prophet also had great affection for them. They donated that Garden and village for the maintenance of the Langar. Till this day these are property of the Gurdwara at Patna Sahib.

GRACE OF GURU

The people of Patna had a great faith in Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. They knew that Guru had Divine powers. In the absence of Guru Tegh Bahadur devotees were flocking to meet child Guru for asking boons.

One day a woman came who had a great desire to have a child. She prayed the child Guru to bless her. But the Guru said, "All happens, what God has written. Nothing is without Him, He is alone bestower, if He desires you will give birth to a child." But the woman requested him again and again. She also prayed Mata Gujri as well. Then Mata Gujri said, "This woman is a great devotee of your father. Bless her so she may get a child."

Then the child Guru smiled and said, "The husband of this woman is owner of a fleet of boats. If they give one boat to me then she would be blessed with five sons."

The women felt very happy and they presented a beautiful boat to the child Guru. By Guru's grace the woman became mother of five sons.

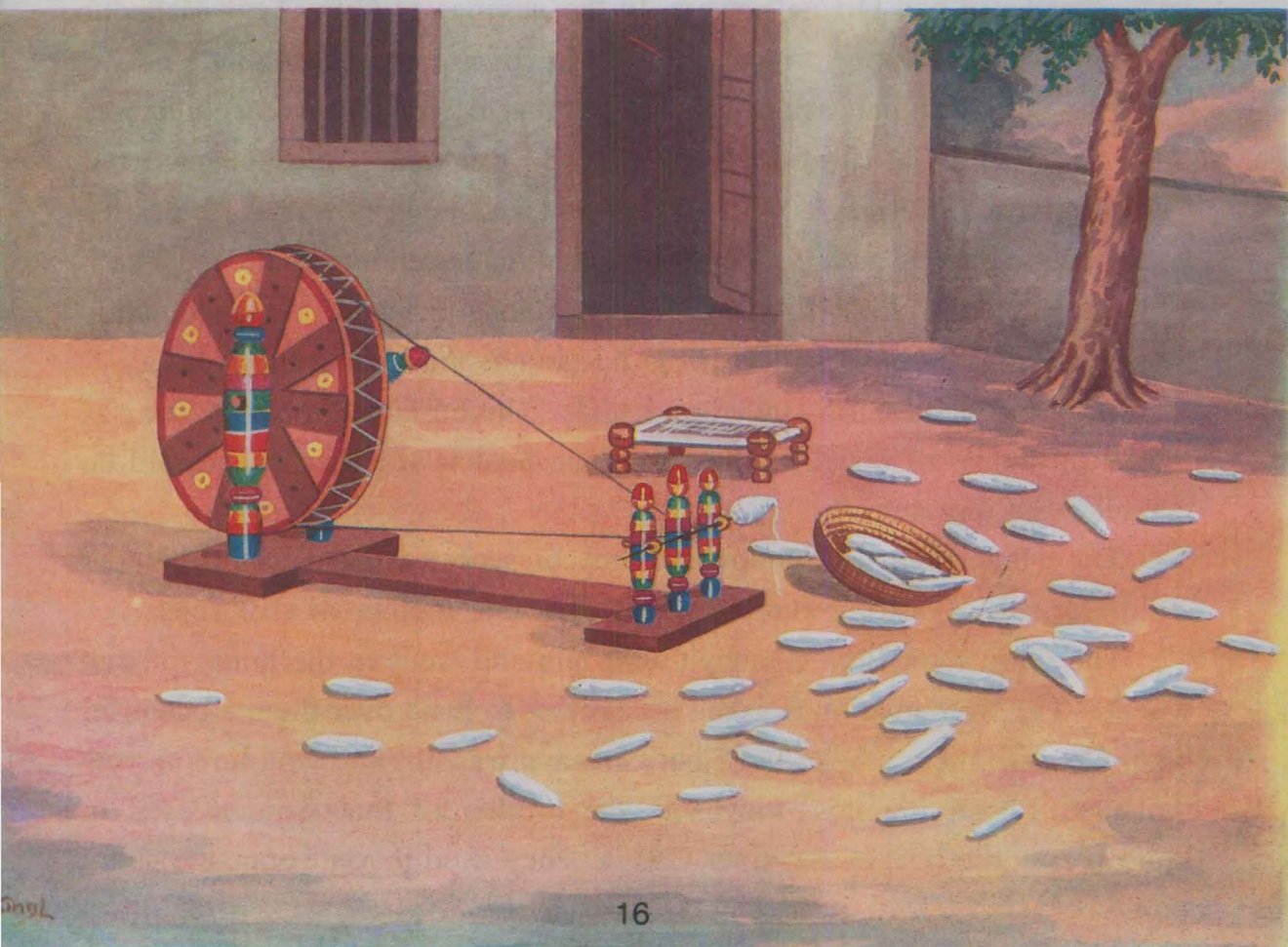
The Guru took Bhai Ghanaya with him and went to the house of that woman. The woman at once asked his brother to hand over them a beautiful boat. He gave them a boat, but Bhai Ghanaya was not knowing how to row the boat. Perceiving this drawback, the brother of that women used to himself row the boat in the river Ganga. They used to visit opposite shore

of the river. There was a dense forest where the child Guru used to play with Bhai Ghanaya. After some time Bhai Ghanaya himself became the master of rowing and they were enjoying the rowing of the boat daily.

SPINNING WHEEL

The games and entertainments of the child Guru were also for benefit of the others. A leper was living at the bank of Ganga. One day when he was sitting at the bank, Guru Ji pushed him into the water of Ganga. Leper cried and abused the little prophet but when he came out of the water, he was free of leprosy. He became as beautiful as a prince of any state.

A poor old woman was living in the neighbourhood of Guru's Haveli. Being a widow and issueless, she was living alone. She would make her both





ends meet by spinning thread. Whenever the child Guru was finding that old woman had gone outside, he would enter her house and used to scatter her cotton balls and thread spun by her. The poor woman would complain to Mata Gujri against this mischief of the child Guru. But Mata Gujri instead of saying something to child Guru, would console the old woman and by giving her a lot of money compensated her loss. One day Mata Gujri said, "My dear child, why are you playing mischief on this poor old woman? What do you get by scattering cotton balls?" On hearing this, child Guru said, "Though I am not getting anything by playing this mischief but this old woman gets a lot of money. What you give her is much more, what she can earn. I want to save the labour of this old mother."

Hearing these words of child Guru, mother Gujri felt very happy.

The child Guru was also giving alms to the poor children. He was taking

money from his grand mother and used to distribute it among the needy. Due to his benevolent nature all children had great respect for him they were always at his back and call. In the evening when they were returning to their homes after playing the games, he served them candy and sweets.

JAGTA SETH

Jagta Seth was a very rich man. He was an outstanding businessman and had established his business all over India. He had thousands of servants. But there was one draw back, though he was gifted with immense wealth but he was not rewarded with the gift of Child. In order to get the inheritor of his vast wealth he married thrice but according to the wishes of Almighty he remained issueless.





He worshipped many Peers and Saints and distributed immense wealth in charity but his desire could not be fulfilled.

When Guru Tegh Bahadur reached Patna then he came to know that a great Saint of Punjab had visited Patna. Then he served Guru with great love and devotion. He made it his daily routine to attend the Sat Sang. He used to hear the singing of hymns and teachings of the Guru. He realized that all existence of various colours and forms are contained in one God. He also perceived that an obedient servant gets great honour from his Master and even receives the double wages.

One day when the congregation had dispersed and Jagta Seth was sitting alone, Guru Ji called him and said, "Jagta you are always offering precious gifts and money to the Guru's Kitchen, today I want to give you something as a gracious gift of God. Here are lying three apples, please take these to

your home as grace of True Guru.”

Taking three apples Jagta felt very happy, he at once understood the meaning of three apples. Reaching home he gave one apple to each of his wives. His three wives were also overjoyed to hear that these apples were given to him by Guru. He told them to eat these apples while reciting the name of God. He is very gracious. By God's grace we get each and everything.

Next year his three wives gave birth to three sons. At that time Guru Tegh Bahadur had gone to Assam. But Guru's family was staying at Patna. So he took his three wives and three sons to mother Gujri and mother Nanaki. He presented many gifts to child Guru. After that he became true devotee of the Guru. Once he said to the child Guru, “What gift will you like to have?”. Guru said, “I will like to have a beautiful kirpan (dagger) and a bow and arrows. Jagta Seth brought these gifts and presented to the child Guru.

When a message came from Anandpur Sahib that Guru's family should be shifted to Punjab, then Jagta Seth was the first man who was most worried. He had a desire in his mind to serve Guru's family all his life. When he met Mata Gujri he told her about his ambition. She said, “Jagta Seth the best way to serve our family is to serve God. Always meditate on God's name. Nothing is equal to priceless Name of God. If we want true happiness contemplate on the Name of God. If you want to serve us, serve the poor, serve the down trodden. Jagta Seth was very much impressed by these words. He said, “I will act upon your advice, but let me help your carvan for safe and comfortable journey”. Mata Ji agreed to his proposal. So Jagta Seth made all arrangements for their departure and also sent his servants to different cities to help them while staying in those cities.

ARCHERY

Childhood games of Guru were also very strange and wonderful. He generally used to organise two groups of children. Of one group he himself would become leader and the other was led by a smart boy chosen by Guru. All these games revolved round playing the soldier. He arranged games and matches which required great skill courage and strength. The people of Patna



used to call these children as army of child Guru.

Instead of playing with dolls, he took great interest in archery. He daily practised archery and as a child he became a fine archer.

There was a well in their house, the water of that well was very sweet and suitable for cooking meals. There was no another well in that street. So the women used to come to fetch water in earthen pitchers. When the women used to go back to their house with pitchers full of water on their heads, then Guru Ji generally made the pitchers target of his aim. The broken pitcher presented a beautiful scene for Guru ji. When these women would complain to Mother Gujri Ji, she would give them a lot of money so they might but an other pitcher.

DEPARTURE FROM PATNA

After staying for sometime in Assam Guru Tegh Bahadur returned to Patna. He was very much pleased to see his son for the first time. Though he did not want to be away from his son even for a minute, but due to very critical situation of Punjab, he had to return to Punjab after staying for a few days. But he advised his family to stay at Patna for sometime.

But when Guru Tegh Bahadur left for Anandpur Sahib, the child Guru felt very anxious to go to Punjab as early as possible. He was very eager to stay with his father.

After few months a message came from Anandpur Sahib, that family of Guru should shift to Anandpur Sahib. Hearing this news the whole family felt very happy, but the people of Patna were crestfallen and sorrowful.

Preparations for departure were made. The resident of city who loved the holy family rushed towards the Haveli of Guru.

The friends of child Guru, who used to play with him and were enjoying grams and Purees with him, were finding themselves leaderless. The child Guru consoled them and said, "Whenever you will play remembering me, I shall be with you."

Raja Fateh Chand and his wife held the child Guru in their arms and kissed him again and again. They considered him as their own child and they cried like the parents. For them separation from the child Guru was unbearable. Child Guru consoled them also and presented a sword and his dress to them and said, "Whenever you remember me, look at these. Serve my freinds grams and Purees as you would have served me." Pandit Shiv Chand was calm and serious. The Guru advised him and said, "Every morning you will see me in your prayers. You have attained the goal of life. Now good or bad are equal for you."

Jagta Seth had made arrangements for the departure. He had prepared a palanquin for the child Guru and litters were made for Mata Gujri and Mata Nanaki. Ox driven carriages were brought for others. Jagta Seth had also sent men to all those places where the carvan would stop at night.

At the time of departure Jagta Seth also made a supplication to the child

Guru. The child Guru said, "Meditate on the Name of God. While reciting Gurbani you will find sitting me by your side."

When the holy family left Patna, a large number of devotees also accompanied them.

HAANDI SAHIB

First stoppage was at Danapur. A large number of devotees of Patna had accompanied them to this place. They continued singing holy hymns all the way. There lived a very old lady. When Guru Tegh Bahadur visited this place the old lady cooked rice and lentils in an earthen pot (Haandi) and with great love offered the food to the Guru.

When the old lady came to know that holy family of Guru Tegh Bahadur had reached Danapur, she came to pay homage to the holy family and to have a glimpse of child Guru. Jagta Seth had made suitable arrangements for the stay of the holy family and devotees. He had also ordered to his servants to prepare the meals for them.

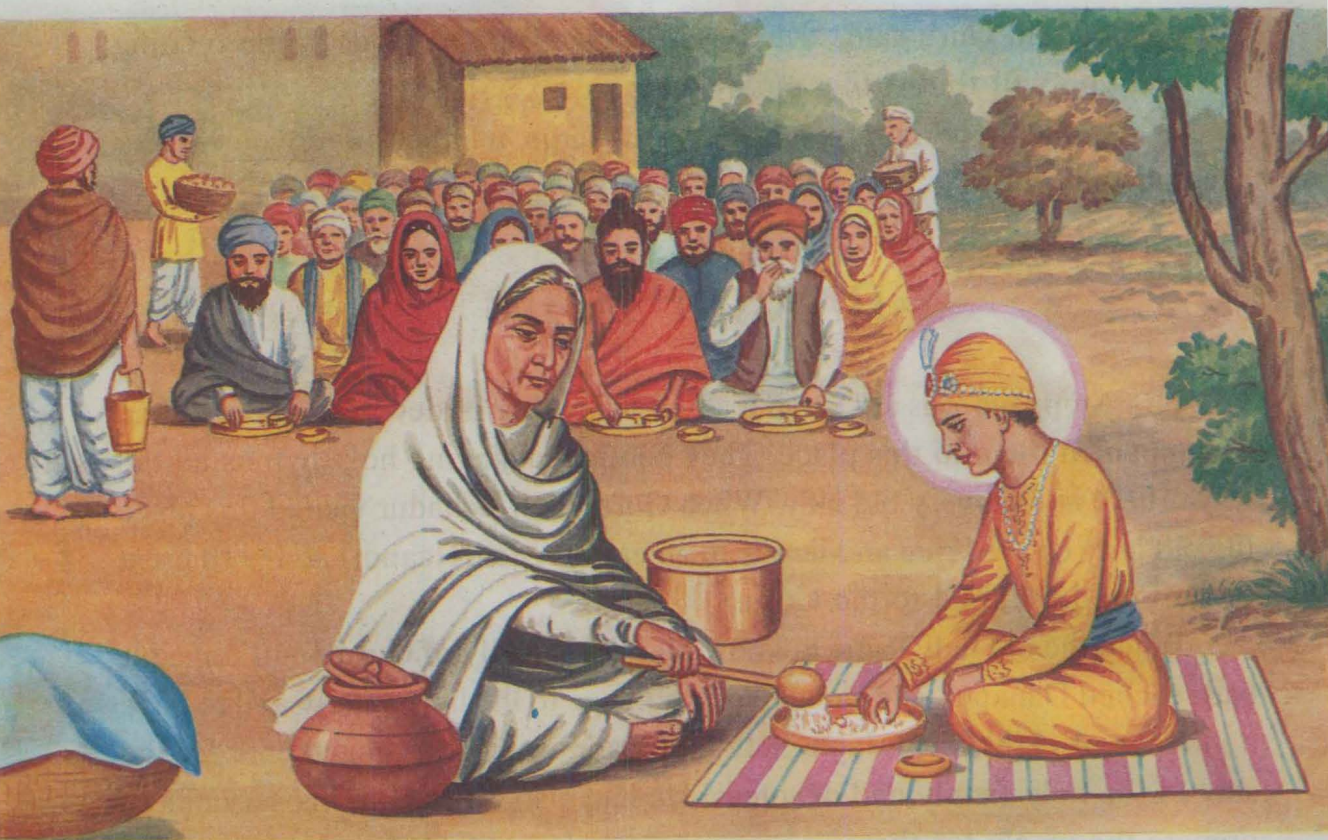
But the old lady said, "I have cooked rice and pulse in same earthen pot (Haandi) for the child Guru also. For the holy family and devotees I have baked loaves and cooked pulses. So all of you are my guests."

The child Guru and rest of family accepted her invitation. Child Guru was served with rice and pulse cooked in the earthen pot and rest of the devotees took the Langar sitting in lines.

After that the old lady converted her house into a Gurdwara which is called as "Haandi Waali Sangat".

LAKHNAUR

After visiting many pilgrim places, the holy family reached Lakhnaur, a town situated near Ambala. The devotees of this area made a comfortable arrangement for their stay. Reaching at Lakhnaur they received a message from Guru Tegh Bahadur that they should rest there for some time, as the whether was not suitable for a journey to Anandpur Sahib. So they were



forced to stay at Lakhnaur for number of months. But child Guru knew very well how to adjust himself at any place. Here also he gathered children of his age and started training them as military soldiers. He was wearing turban attached with plume, so he could be recognized very easily.

He was taking keen interest in wrestling. He made an 'AKHARA' where young wrestlers were practising the art of wrestling. Here he learnt house riding as well. The children from far and near were coming to see child Guru's adventures.

When devotees of Malwa, Doaba and Majha came to know that child Guru had been staying at Lakhnaur, they came flocking to have a glimpse of the child Guru. Who ever saw him, felt that child Guru would grow into a man of great power and strength. When he was riding the horse or practising with his sword, he was reminding them of his grand father Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji.

At Lakhnaur there was a well whose water was very brackish. The people of area requested Mother Gujri for a new well. So with the blessings of

Mother Gujri Ji a new well was dug. The water of this well was very sweet. These two memorials still exist at Lakhnaur.

Peer Bikhani Shah came here again to pay homage to the respected holy child. At that time child Guru was playing with his little friends. Peer at once recognized the child Guru and lifting him with great love, he took him to Guru's house. There the child Guru sat in the lap of the saint and they talked for a long time. Peer said, "Please confer a boon on me, let my pedigree exist forever." Child Guru blessed him and said, "Always believe in one God."

There was also another Peer living there. His name was Peer Araf Din. He also realized that the holy child was God in human form and bowed to him.



FATHER AND SON

While staying at Lakhnaur, the child Guru was always contemplating to see and meet his father. It was his eager desire to sit in the lap of his father. At last his desire was fulfilled. Guru Tegh Bahadur sent his followers to bring the holy family at Anandpur.

On receiving the message, the holy family at once prepared to leave for Anandpur Sahib. When devotees of that area came to know about this, they came in thousands to pay homage to the holy family and to have a glimpse of the child Guru. The child Guru had stolen the heart of all by his marvellous actions.

No Sikh could ask them to stay, but none was happy to miss them. The child Guru blessed all and advised them to contemplate on the Name of One God.

After leaving Lakhnaur the holy family reached Keeratpur. Keeratpur was a city of his Grandfather. Here many families of Sikh Guru's resided. They stayed there for a night. Mother Nanaki, mother Gujri and child Guru met all their relatives very cordially.

Next day the holy family left for Anandpur Sahib. A large number of devotees from Anandpur Sahib came in advance to welcome the holy family. They had come all the way chanting holy hymns. They felt blessed to have a glimpse of the child king and showered flowers on them. With great enthusiasm they entered the city of Anandpur Sahib.

At that time Guru Tegh Bahadur was sitting in the Darbar. Entering the Darbar hall and on seeing his father Guru, the beloved child bowed in deep reverence. Guru Tegh Bahadur blessed him and lifted him up. On that day a large number of people had come to attend the holy congregation. They were all anxious to have a glimpse of the beloved child king. According to his wish the child Guru was sitting in the lap of Guru Tegh Bahadur. All eyes were centered on him. They were feeling blessed by having a glimpse of the beloved child.



THE KASHMIRI PANDITS

Aurangzeb was a very cruel ruler. He forced Hindus to embrace Islam. But those who resisted, were being tortured horribly. He demolished the Hindu Temples and built Mosques on very spots. He banned Hindu fairs and festivals.

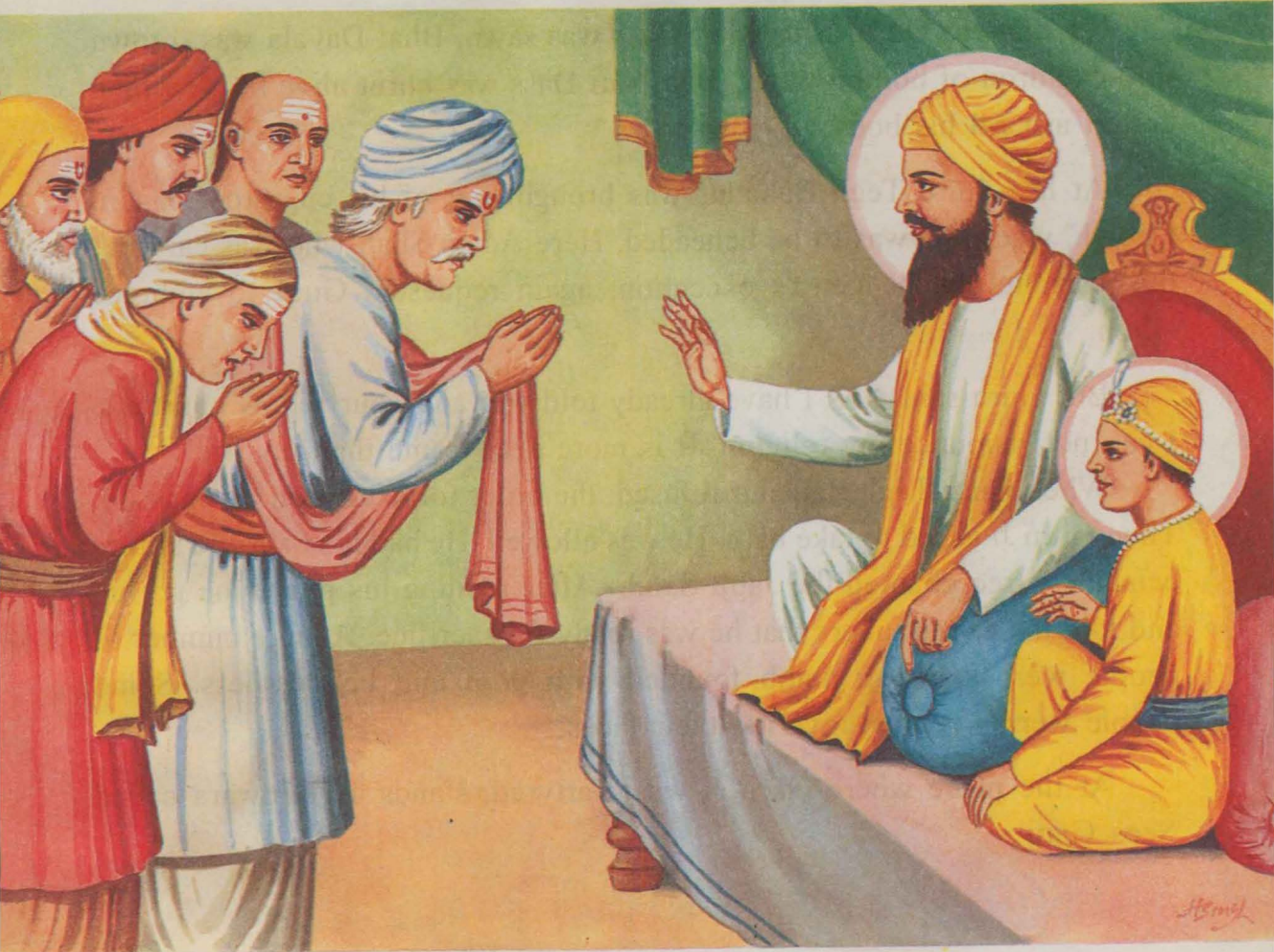
Aurangzeb understood that Brahmans of Kashmir were considered most sacred. So if they would embrace Islam then the other Hindus of the lower class would not mind to come into the fold of Islam. So he ordered the governor of Kashmir to force the Brahmans to embrace Islam. Brahmans were desperate and helpless. They did not wish to lose their lives or religion. Hill Raja's were against Guru Tegh Bahadur, they advised the Brahmans to

go to the Anandpur Sahib to meet the Gure and seek his help. A delegation of prominent Brahmans came to Anandpur Sahib to request the Guru to help them in that hour of crisis. They related him their tales of woe. On hearing their dreadful and horrible story Guru was very much moved. He looked sad and thoughtful. He pondered, "If none comes to help these Pandits they will either embrace Islam or will be eliminated by the cruel king."

At that time the nine year old, the child Guru was sitting by the side of his father and was listening keenly the woeful story of the Brahmans. The Guru was aware that something tangible should be done to arouse the conscience of King Aurangzeb. The emperor was very cruel and had made up his mind to bring all the Hindus in the fold of Islam. Though the Guru did not believe in idol worship. He and his Divine Masters had been preaching against Brahmanism for two hundred years. But it was against his faith to bear such cruelty and oppression. He also knew very well that fear and cowardness of the frightened Brahmans could only be dispelled by some brave deeds. They were also leaderless. The need of the hour was that they should be guided by a great and brave leader. So after sitting calm for some time Guru Tegh Bahadur said, "This tragedy can be averted only if some noble and brave soul lays down his life against this injustice."

Hearing this Gobind Rae Said, "My dear father, who else can be more worthy than you?" Guru Tegh Bahadur was stunned but he felt very happy to hear these words of courage, wisdom and nobility from his son. Guru at once made up his mind. Addressing the Kashmiri Brahmans he said, "Go and send this message to Aurangzeb, if he can bring their leader Guru Tegh Bahadur into the fold of Islam, then all the Brahmans are ready to embrace Islam."

On hearing this Pandits felt very happy and satisfied. They presented their petition to the king through the governor of Lahore. The enraged king at once issued orders to arrest the Guru. But before receiving the summons, Guru Ji decided to leave for Delhi. He looked at the beloved child and said, "I know you are not an ordinary child, now get ready to shoulder the responsibilities." Taking with him some trusted disciples he left Anandpur Sahib.



MARTYRDOM OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR

On his way to Delhi, Guru ji visited many places in Malwa and preached his teachings. With his some disciples he was arrested at Agra and was brought to Delhi. At Delhi, he was kept chained and imprisoned in an iron cage. He was persuaded and then forced to give up his faith. But Guru ji did not relent, he was tortured in most cruel manners. The king was very particular on Guru's conversion to Islam. But Guru did not agree to abandon his religion. Then Guru said to the Qazi, "The threat of death has no effect on me. I am prepared for death and I accept it cheerfully." At last the Royal Qazi issued orders that Guru should be beheaded.

To impress Guru, Bhai Mati Dass was sawn, Bhai Dayala was thrown into cauldron of boiling water, Bhai Sati Dass was burnt alive by wrapping cotton around his body.

At last Guru Tegh Bahadur was brought out of his cage to Chandni Chowk, where he was to be beheaded. Here Adam Shah who was carrying the warrants of the Guru's execution, again requested Guru to embrace Islam.

But Guru said, "As I have already told you and your fellow courtiers, I can not renounce my religion. It is more dear to me than my life".

When Guru Tegh Bahadur refused; the order for execution was passed. Then Guru Ji asked to take bath. He was allowed. He had his bath and sitting beneath a tree chanted the Japji Sahib. After reciting his prayer he got up and told the executioners that he was ready for sacrifice. A large number of people were standing dumb founded with grief and helplessness. Some people were weeping covering their faces.

At the place where Guru Ji was martyred, stands a Gurdwara called 'Sees Ganj'.



CREMATION

When Guru Tegh Bahadur was beheaded at Chandni Chowk then the rulers made strict security arrangements so that nobody could remove away the dead body of the Guru. A large crowd had gathered there to see the tragic death of a Saint. Though the crowd also included some disciples of Guru but none was able to break the cordon of security to remove the body or head



of the Guru. Then the rulers dispersed the crowd. Tight security arrangements were also lightened. Then two dare devil Sikhs, Bhai Jaita and Bhai Doolo appeared on the scene. They took the head and wrapping it in a sheet, ran away. When the rulers came to know about this, they sent soldiers to arrest them, but they could not trace them out.

Travelling day and night they reached Keeratpur Sahib and sent a

messege to Anandpur Sahib. Next day on reaching Anandpur Sahib, they were recieved by mother Nanaki, mother Gujri, Gobind Rae and other members of the family. Gobind Rae himself received the holy head from Bhai Jaita and Bhai Doolo and blessed them. The holy head was cremated with due rites performed by Gobind Rae. Now a Gurdwara stands at place of cremation, known as 'Sees Ganj' Anandpur.

A daring Sikh, Lakhi Shah Lubana managed to remove the headless body of the Guru and took it to his house. He cremated the body by setting fire to his house. At the place of cremation a beautiful Gurdwara stands. The name of the Gurdwara is 'Rakab Ganj'.

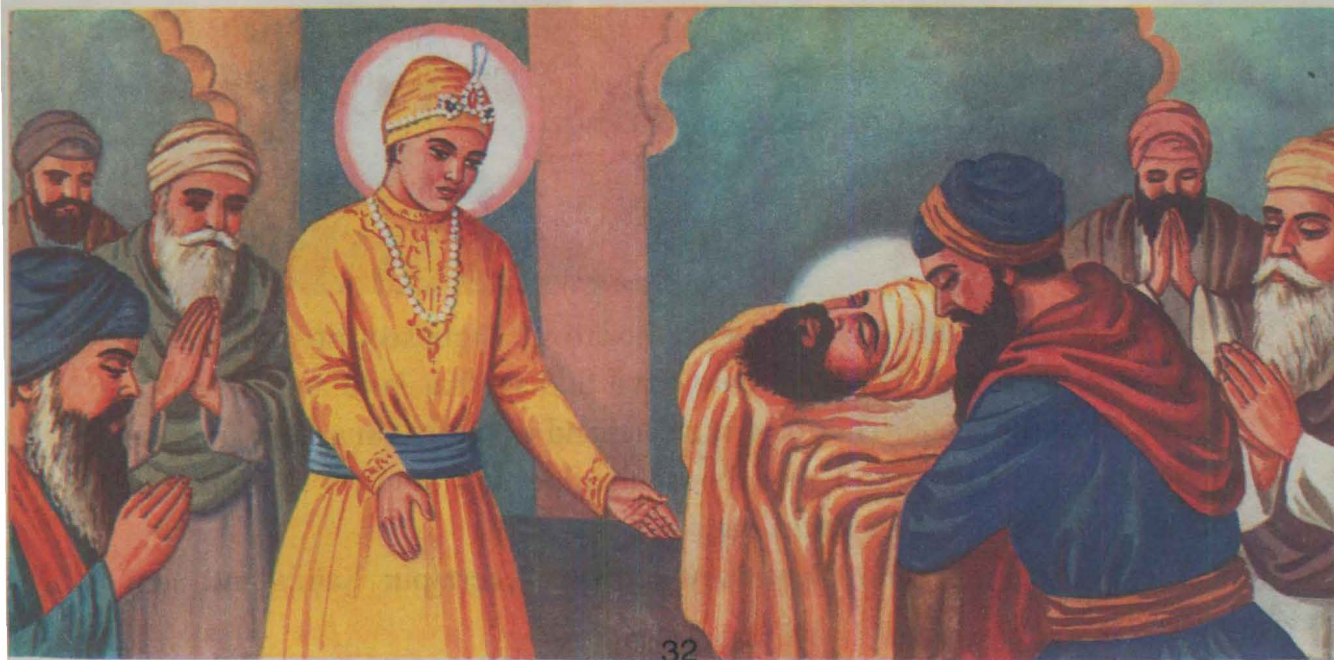
The greatest contribution is the way he groomed and prepared his son for the dreadful struggle ahead. The greatest lesson he left for his Sikhs was his own life and martyrdom. When he left Anandpur before proceeding towards Delhi he said, "Death is certainty, one must not set one's heart on this world. It is God who sends pleasure and pain, these must he accepted as the will of God. One must do one's duty and should recite the Name of one God. God's name alone leads to liberation". About the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh wrote :-

He broke his potsherd on the Delhi king's head. And he left for paradise.

None else in this world can match Tegh Bahadur's sacrifice.

The people mourned Tegh Bahadur's sacrifice.

There was wailing in the world but rejoicing in heaven.



YOUNG GOBIND RAE

After the Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sri Gobind Rae realized that there was need to consolidate his Sikhs in order to face the tyrannical rule of the Mughals. Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution also outraged the conscience of the entire Sikh brotherhood. The whole community was shaken to hear the news of slaughtering of a non-violent holy man. The Sikh thronged towards Anandpur Sahib to help the thirteen year old Gobind Rae.

On the other hand, young Gobind Rae was not overwhelmed with the tragic loss of his father. He had firm determination and will power to fight the forces of black hearted rulers. The disheartened Sikhs, who reached Anandpur, perceived Gobind Rae as the most appropriate leader to guide the destiny of Sikhs. Though he was very young, but he was very mature in manipulating and handling the adverse situations.

At that time Hindus had become so weak and coward, that they could not defend themselves. On the other hand Aurangzeb was a very narrow-minded and cruel ruler. He had made up his mind to bring all the Hindus into the fold Muslim religion. He was torturing them to change their religion. Hindus were too meek to resist. So Gobind Rae thought that new religion with a distinct identity should be created.

Sri Gobind Rae started practising archery, going out on hunting expeditions and playing mock battles with his friends in very early age. He was always doing acts of bravery. He was also very intelligent in his studies. When he became well-versed in Punjabi language then Munshi Peer Mohammad was appointed to teach him Persian language. Though many other students were also sitting with him to learn persion, but he was so bright that he learned persian very soon and with in few months he became master of such books which were difficult to translate even for his teacher. Seeing this the Maulvi considered him as the embodiment of God and saluted him with great respect. Gobind Rae also liked his teacher very much. One day he gave him a certificate of honour which remained with the family of Peer Mohammad for many generations.

Later on Sri Gobind Rae became a great scholar of Persian and wrote Zafarnama in Persion poetry. He wrote many books which has been compiled into one Granth, known as Dasam Granth Sahib.

ANANDPUR SAHIB

The child Guru settled at Anandpur Sahib after coming from Patna Sahib. He spent his childhood and youth at Anandpur. He founded the Khalsa Panth in this very city. So this city has a great and deeper concern with the life of the Guru.

The real founder of this city was Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. He called this city as Anandpur or the city of Immortal Bliss. He bought some land from a hill-chief in 1666 A.D. near river Satluj and near famous Hindu pilgrimage the Naina Devi Mandir.

When the Guru founded this city he told the people that the residents of this village would neither be afraid of any one and nor they would trouble the others. Now a days this city is Sub-Division of the Ropar District.

Guru Gobind Singh gave great importance to this city, as he founded the Khalsa Panth here, so this became as the birth place of Khalsa. Guru Ji built five forts inside this city and named them as Anandgarh, Lohgarh, Fatehgarh, Kesgarh and Holgarh.

Guru Ji also turned this city a great centre of learning and other literary activities.

Guru Ji wrote 'Dasam Granth Sahib' in this very city. He wrote 17175 Chhands, sixteen important books and in all 1428 pages. This now have been claimed by all Sikh literary authorities that all writings included in the 'Dasam Granth Sahib' had been written by Guru Gobind Singh himself.

Anandpur was a great centre of learnings, arts and other cultural activities. The great artists, singers, poets and painters who were rejected by Aurangzeb due to his anti-literary policy, took refuse at Anandpur Sahib. Here they were honoured by Guru Sahib and were given monthly salaries or scholarships. They were working under the guidance of Guru Ji. From 1669 A.D. to 1699 A.D. Anandpur remained the beam light of literary world. Guru gave great respect to these literary persons. Many historians write that the Guru had 52 poets, 36 writers in his Darbar, who were writing their works in Persian, Sanskrit and Punjabi from day to night. Four writers used to rewrite the writings of Guru Sahib regularly in order to spread his teachings.

So even the petty dust of this land has the touch of Guru's pious feet and these smallest pieces give us the message of the teachings of Guru Sahib.

Anandpur Sahib had also seen many miserable days. The hill-chiefs and the cruel army of Aurangzeb invaded this city many times. When the army of Aurangzeb besieged the fort of Anandpur for a long time, Guru Ji was forced to leave Anandpur. So during one mid winter cold night Guru Ji left Anandpur for good and never visited it again. The land of Anandpur is still anxiously waiting to have a touch of the pious feet of Guru Gobind Singh.

Before leaving the fort the Guru Ji destroyed everything that could be burned and demolished in Anandpur. What could not be burnt he asked his Sikhs to bury that in the ground. He then left Anandpur with his two wives, his mother, his four sons and hundreds of his devotees. The Guru vacated the fort on the night between 18th and 19th of December 1704. There was much pain but at that time there was no other alternative.



Sri Anandpur Sahib

GURUSHIP

Guru Gobind Singh assumed Guruship on 11th November, 1675 A.D. at Anandpur Sahib. Baba Ram Kanwar, a descendant of Baba Budha Ji performed the ceremony of Guruship. He presented the Guru, a garland of pearls, plumed turban, one sword, one horse, one falcon and five coins of gold. Guru Ji looked very handsome and smart while sitting at the throne of Guruship. The congregation was full of joy and happiness. The musicians were reciting the holy hymns.

After assuming the Guruship, Guru Gobind Singh presented siropas to Baba Ram Kanwar, Baba Gurditta Ji and other devotees.

Though Aurangzeb had issued strict orders for Sikhs, still millions of Sikhs reached Anandpur Sahib at the occasion of the ceremony. It is said that according to one estimate 'Karah Parsad' worth rupees fifty thousand was distributed among the Sikhs.

On assuming Guruship, Guru Ji felt that time had come to accomplish the great task, for which the God had sent him in this mortal world. Guru's writes in his autobiography named as 'Bachitar Natak' as under:-

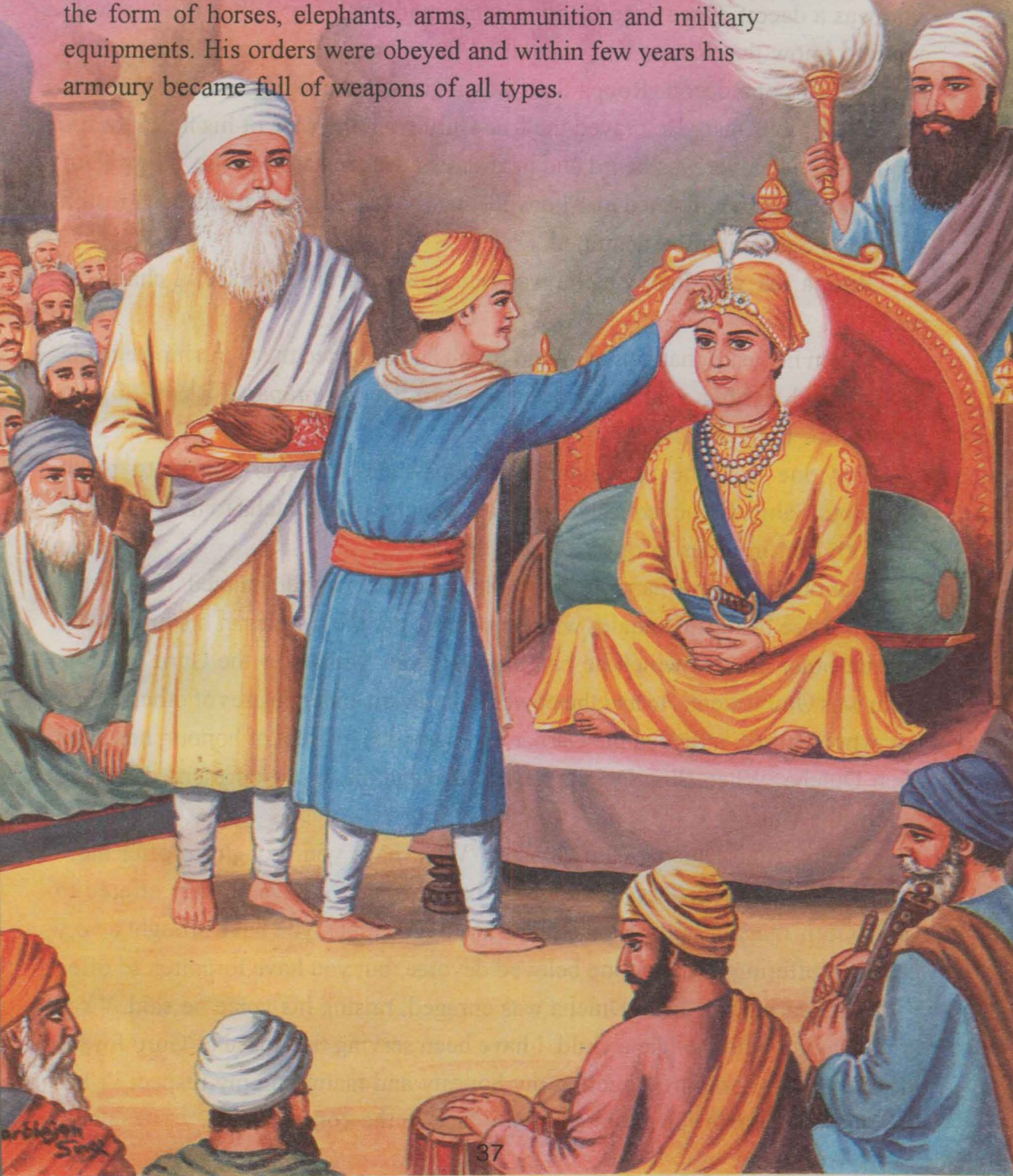
*"I install and consider you as my son,
And create you in human form to spread My faith.
Go and spread the true religion of Mine.
Restrain the people from evil and worthless acts.
Spread righteousness in all places.
Capture and destroy the evil, the wicked and the sinful".
"For this very purpose did I assume birth understand you,
holy men clearly in your souls.
To spread true religion, to uplift and to save the saints.
And to uproot and kill the tyrants one and all."*

So in order to fulfil his mission, he set about preparing himself and his people for that great cause. He understood that he had to turn the spiritually, physically and mentally retarded people into a nation of strong saint-soldiers. He himself was a child at that time. So he started to educate and train himself. He understood that great works of literature were in Sanskrit and Persian. So he learnt Sanskrit, Persian, Brij Bhasha and Punjabi. He also persuaded his followers to learn these languages. For this purpose he arranged learned teachers of these languages for their education. To prepare saint-soldiers he started to enroll soldiers and techniques of up-to-date warfares were taught to them.

Within a few years Anandpur developed into a city of scholars, intellectuals

and saint-soldiers. The Darbar of Guru looked like a military camp. They were passing their mornings and evenings in devotion to God and days were passed in hunting, shooting, horse racing and all types of other military exercises.

Guru Ji advised to his devotees that in future he would like the presents in the form of horses, elephants, arms, ammunition and military equipments. His orders were obeyed and within few years his armoury became full of weapons of all types.



BHAI DULCHA

In city of Multan there lived a Sikh of Guru Tegh Bahadur. He was very wealthy and his name was Roopa Seth. In Multan there also lived an other Roopa, who was a dacoit. Once dacoit Roopa committed a robbery. When the "kotwal" came to know that Roopa had committed the robbery, he arrested Roopa Seth instead of Roopa dacoit. Roopa Seth was a great devotee of the Guru and was a true and pious man. He prayed the true Guru from the core of his heart for his acquittal. His prayer was heard and next day he was released as the "kotwal" of the near by village informed his "kotwal" that the real Roopa dacoit was arrested so Roopa Seth might be acquitted.

Roopa felt very happy as he was relinquished from disgraceful charge of robbery.

When he heard that Guru Gobind Singh had assumed the Guruship he made up his mind to offer valuable articles to Guru. He got prepared a pair of gold bangles for the Guru.

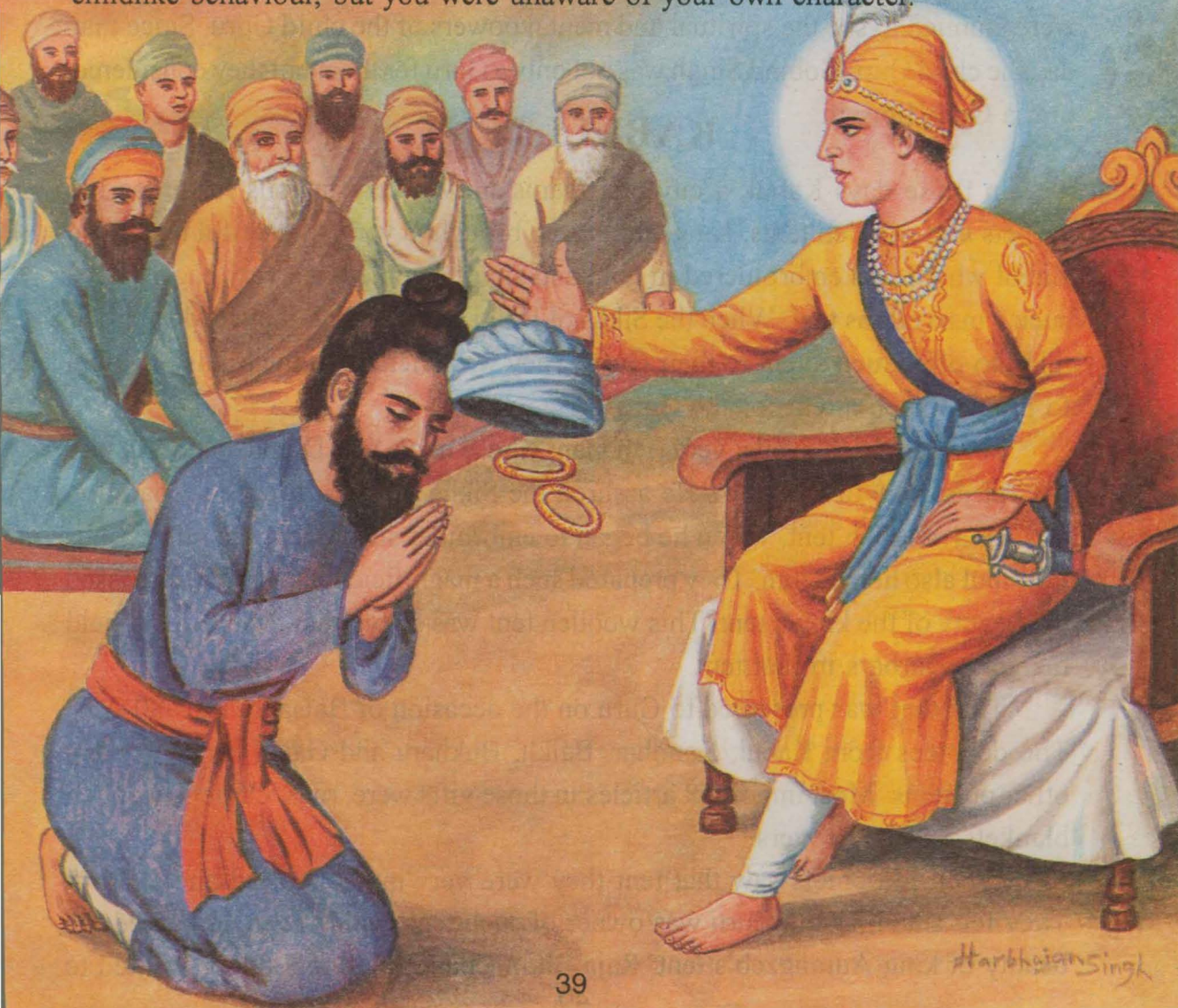
But due to some unavoidable circumstances, he was unable to reach Anandpur Sahib. So he requested the local masand Bhai Dulcha to take away his gift with him in order to offer to the Guru.

But on reaching Anandpur Sahib Bhai Dulcha's mind changed. He wanted to keep those beautiful bangles with him. So he hid the bangles in his turban and offered other articles which he had brought from Multan, to the Guru. But the Guru was Omniscient. He had the power to know the inner desires of others. Next day when Guru Ji attended the Darbar and occupied his seat of honour, he called Bhai Dulcha. When Bhai Dulcha heard his name, he at once presented himself before the Guru.

Seeing Bhai Dulcha, Guru Ji said, "What have you brought to offer me?" Bhai Dulcha replied, "My Lord, what I have brought, I have already offered to you." Guru Ji again said, "Bhai Dulcha try to remember, you have brought a very precious offering from my one beloved devotee, but you have forgotten to offer.

On hearing this Bhai Dulcha was enraged, raising his voice he said, "You are behaving with me like a child. I have been serving the house of Guru for the last fifty years. You are doubting my honesty and maligning my respect. It has become unbearable for me to show my face to the congregation."

Guru Ji smiled and said, "Bhai Dulcha come near me." When he reached near him the Guru hit a severe blow at his turban and the turban fell on the ground. Guru Ji said, "I have not maligned your respect so far, but now I am going to show the hidden side of your respect." The whole congregation was astonished to see a pair of beautiful and precious gold bangles falling on the ground along with the turban. A devotee got up and handed over that pair of bangles to the Guru. Showing the pair of bangles to the congregation Guru Ji said, "Bhai Dulcha tell me, what was hidden in your so called respect. What would that my beloved devotee be thinking, who had sent these bangles for me with great devotion and emotion. He showed a great faith on your pious face, but you have cheated him. He was unaware of your cunningness. You were telling me for my childlike behaviour, but you were unaware of your own character."



Bhai Dulcha felt very much ashamed and fell on the feet of the Guru. He prayed again and again. "O my Lord ! Forgive me, I considered you a child, but you are true Guru, the Omniscient Guru, the God Himself. Please forgive me, please pardon me. You have opened my eyes, I became blind when I tried to deceive the house of Guru. Now who would doubt this true and Omniscient Guru, who have all the powers to know the inner desires of others."

The Guru smiled and said, "Bhai Dulcha there is no drought of forgiveness in the house of Guru, go, you have been forgiven, but keep this in mind that true respect lies in truthfulness. Liars and cheats always suffer. They not only lose this world, but are also dishonoured in the next world." After being acquitted from the court of the Guru, Bhai Dulcha felt very happy.

The congregation saw the episode of Bhai Dulcha with great interest. They were stunned to see the spiritual and mental powers of the child Guru. Since that day the child Guru Gobind Singh was not only a Guru for them but they considered him a God Himself.

KABULI TENT

In those days Kabul, a city of Afganistan was very famous for preparing carpets and woollen tents. King Aurangzeb brought a very beautiful tent from Kabul which was embroidered in gold and silver. People were very eager to see such a marvellous tent. When the Sikhs of Delhi saw this tent, they made up their mind to offer such a tent to their Guru. They wrote letters to the Sikhs of Kabul to prepare such a tent for the Guru.

In Kabul there lived a very rich man, whose name was Duni Chand. He was a great devotee of the Guru. He assured the Sikhs of Delhi for the preparation of such a woollen tent. When he began to embroider such a tent the other Sikhs of Kabul also helped him. They prepared such a magnificent tent that it surpassed the beauty of the king's tent. This woollen tent was so big that even Guru Ji held his great Darbars in that tent.

That tent was presented to Guru on the occasion of Baisakhi in 1680 A.D. The devotees from Kabul, Kandhar, Balkh, Bukhara and Gazni brought many other presents. Most important articles in those gifts were, rugs, carpets, woollen blankets and bed covers.

When hill-chiefs saw that tent they were very much amazed and strayed. They felt small, as the Guru was owner of such tent, which even surpassed the beauty of king Aurangzeb's tent. Raja Bhim Chand ruler of Kahloor wanted to

have that tent. Once he sent his minister to ask the Guru to give the tent on loan on the occasion of the betrothal ceremony of his son. But Guru Ji declined to give the Kabuli tent to the hill-chief. He said to his minister, "all offerings are made by the devotees not to him in person, but to the Guruship. So it is not for him to go against the wishes of his followers in order to please hill-chief."

When Raja of Assam came with his family to stay with Guru Ji, then he was offered to stay in that particular tent.



RAJA RATTAN RAE

In those days Assam was a big state. The ruler of this state was Raja Ram Rae. He was very wealthy, but always remained gloomy and sad on account of lack of a son. Once he approached Guru Tegh Bahadur for the blessing of a son and heir of his state. His wish was fulfilled, but he left the world, when his son was just a child. While dying he advised his wife to bring up the child as a devout Sikh. The name of the child was Rattan Rae. The queen always tried to mould his son according to the wishes of her husband.

When Rattan Rae grew up to a lad of twelve years Rani told his son about the Guru and his blessings. On hearing this the young Raja Rattan Rae expressed his eager desire to meet the great Guru. But then Rani told him that Guru Tegh Bahadur had laid down his life for the cause of the Dharma.

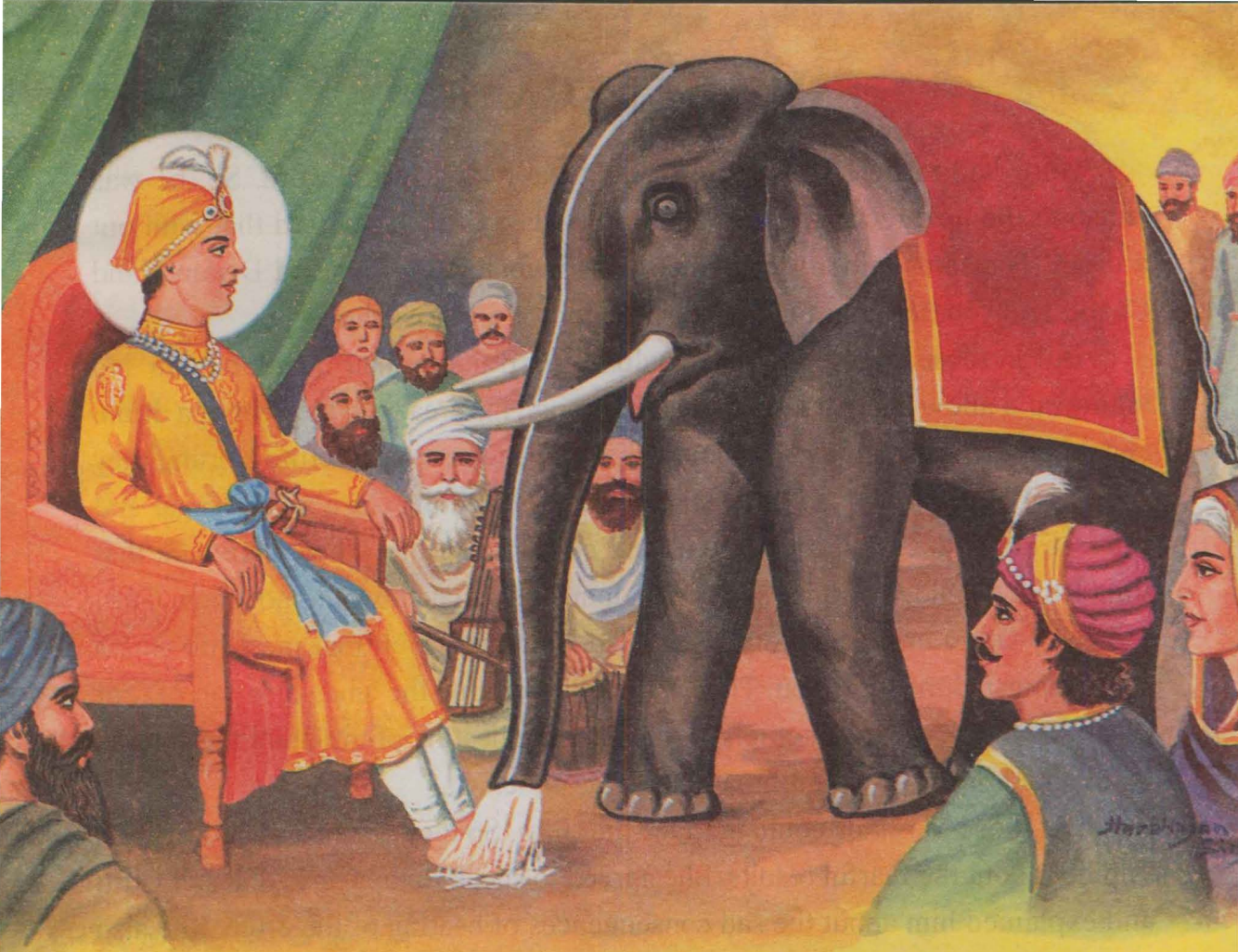
She narrated the whole story of Guru's martyrdom. When Raja Rattan Rae heard that story he became emotional and wept with grief and disappointment. But Rani advised his son not to lose heart. She said, "Though Guru Tegh Bahadur does not exist in mortal form, but his spirit lives in the form of Guru Gobind Singh, who is guiding and blessing his Sikhs, you can see him and can get his blessings. He is also young like you and you would enjoy his company."

On hearing this, Rattan Rae became happy. He at once ordered his minister to collect valuable and costly presents for the Guru. All preparations for journey were made.

After a long journey, Raja Rattan Rae alongwith his mother and other ministers reached Anandpur Sahib on the occasion of Diwali. The royal family were honoured to stay in the Kabuli tent.

Next day Raja Rattan Rae and his mother attended the Darbar of Guru Gobind Singh. Then the presents were offered to the Guru.

The Guru was greatly pleased to see the presents. Raja first presented a singular weapon-five-in-one-out of which five types of weapons could be made - pistol, sword, lance, dagger and club. Second gift was a wonderful throne from which stepped out puppets to play chess. Third gift was a drinking cup of a precious metal. As a fourth gift five beautiful horses with splendored trappings were offered to the Guru. But of all these presents the most wonderful present was a black elephant. This elephant was unique in appearance and was trained



to perform various acts of service. He had a white stripe stretching from the tip of trunk along the forehead and back, right upto the end of his tail. This elephant waved "Chaur" over the Guru, for washing the feet of the Guru, he held a jug of water in his trunk and after washing Guru's feet, he wiped them with a towel. He fetched back the arrows shot by the Guru and did many other things which a common man can never imagine. Then Raja requested that these offerings must ever remain with the Guru. Raja Rattan Rae stayed at Anandpur for about five months. As being of the same age they went on several hunting excursions and always enjoyed each other's company. When Rattan Rae made his mind to return home, Guru Ji blessed him with gift of Name and also advised him saying, "True worship consists in doing one's duty honestly and diligently and while performing duty one's mind must be firmly fixed on Almighty."

Guru gave him very precious gifts, which had been held in great respect and honour by him and by his successors.

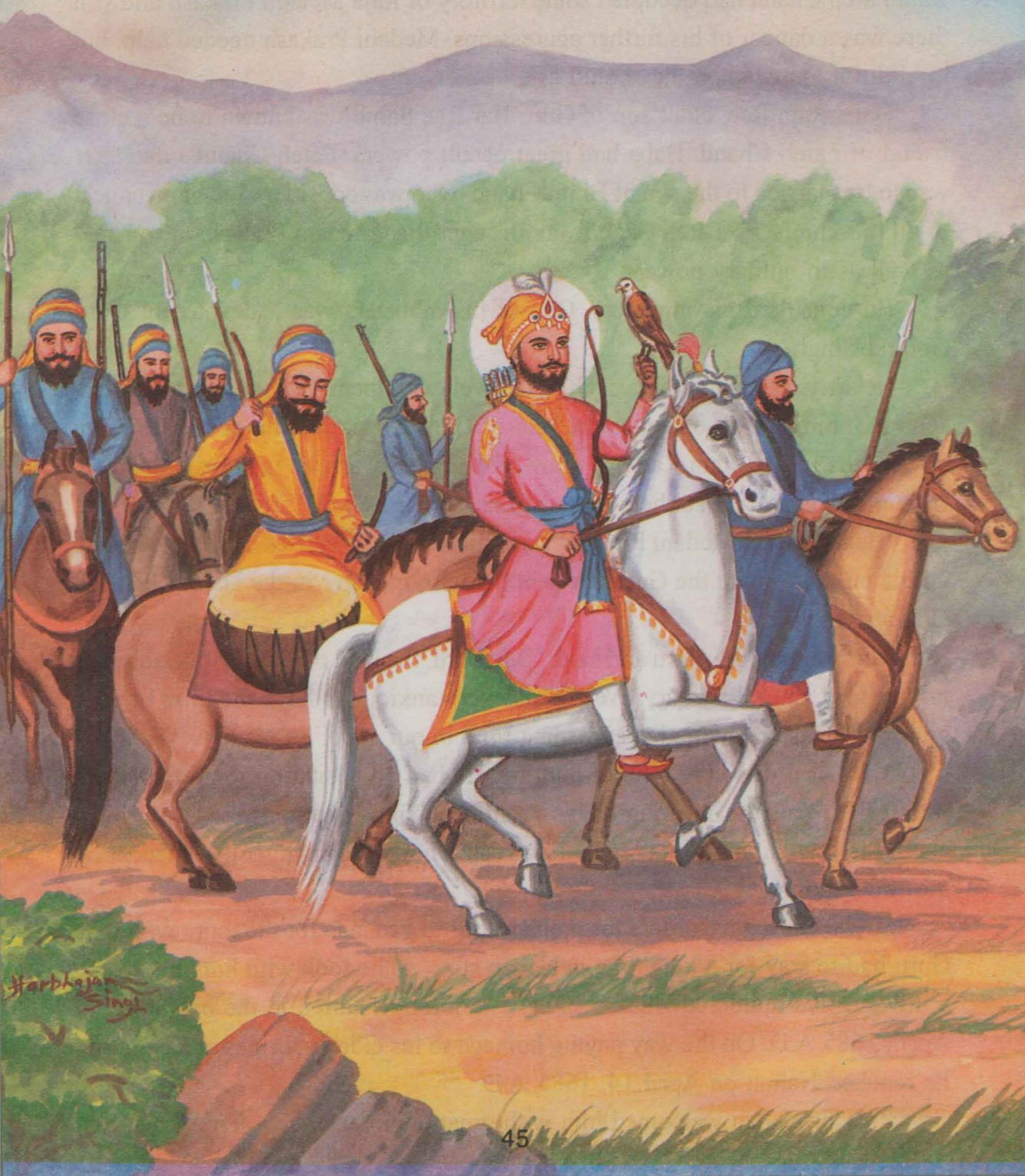
RANJIT NAGAARA

Guru had made up his mind to fight the tyrants with sword. So, he was enlisting the new recruits in his army every day. Guru Ji realized that without a drum (Nagaara) military equipment was incomplete. He called Diwan Nand Chand and ordered him for the construction of a big Nagaara.

But in those days only kings could beat a drum in their own kingdom. No king would allow another king to march through his area with the beat of a drum. But when the Masands came to know that Diwan was constructing a drum, they were frightened. They had fattened themselves by eating Guru's free langar and were afraid of losing their peaceful and comfortable life. They were sure that Raja Bhim Chand, in whose state Anandpur was situated, would not allow Guru to beat a Drum in his territory. They also knew very well that most hill-chiefs were against Guru's mission. They were not tolerating the amalgamation of four castes. So when these hill-chiefs would hear the beating of the drum they would be agitated and war would break out in no time.

But those Masands could not face the Guru. So they went to his mother and told her about the fearful results. She agreed to speak to the Guru. She met Guru and explained him about the sad consequences of beating of the drum. She also advised him to devote himself to religious affairs only. After hearing mother's advice calmly Guru said, "My dear mother, my religion and religion of my forefathers inspires me to take up arms. I tell you what I am doing, I am doing according to the Will of God. Almighty had sent me in this world to uproot the tyrants and uplift the down trodden. Now I will not sit in seclusion. Now I must accomplish the mission of Guru Nanak. According to wish of God, tyrants have to be disarmed and evil doers have to be destroyed. I am not afraid of hill-chiefs. I bear them no malice and I have done them no harm. I don't want to be a Raja or a king. But I only want to do good to the poor people. I want to uplift them and want to make their lot better in all respects. I will not provoke any war, but if any one attacks me unprovoked and without any reason, then I will not stand before him with folded hands, but will face him with a sword in my hand and God's Name on my lips. I must not forget the order of the God which He gave me while sending me into this world. I must liberate the humanity from tyranny and bondage".

Hearing his son's great resolve, mother agreed for the construction of a drum. At last a great Nagaara was prepared and Guru Ji named it 'Ranjit' or the victorious on the battle-field.



RAJA MEDANI PRAKASH

Raja Medani Prakash was chief of the Nahan hill-state. He had an enmity with Raja Fateh Chand of Srinagar. The reason for their mutual enmity was that Raja Fateh Chand had occupied some territory of Raja Medani Prakash and still there was a danger of his further aggressions. Medani Prakash needed help, but he did not know whom he should ask.

Baba Ram Rae, elder son of Guru Har Rae Sahib was known to be a close friend of Fateh Chand. Baba had great occult powers. Fateh Chand's daughter was to be married to the son of Bhim Chand, who was considered to be strongest of all hill-chiefs. So Fateh Chand was stronger than Medani Prakash in spiritual as well as in military powers.

He consulted his ministers. One of his ministers was a devotee of Guru Gobind Singh.

He advised Raja to request Guru to dwell with them for some time. He said, "Guru Gobind Singh occupies the seat of Guru Nanak and he possesses more powers than Baba Ram Rae. An army of dauntless warriors is at his command. He himself is a great soldier. He is a great archer as well".

'Hearing this' Medani Prakash was relieved of his worries. He at once made up his mind to invite the Guru. He sent his wise minister in the Darbar of Guru Gobind Singh.

Minister met the Guru and said, "My Lord, the land of Nahan state abounds in beautiful natural scenery. We are also very anxious to have the bliss of your glimpse. Please come and spend some time in our state."

The Guru was very fond of hunting. He had no hesitation to go to Nahan. But still he called a meeting of his prominent Sikhs and consulted with them about the invitation of Raja Medani Prakash. They were unanimous in accepting the invitation.

So the Guru gave orders for preparations to be made for the journey. As the Guru had to stay for a long time in Nahan state, so he took with him, his strong army and five hundred Udaasi Sikhs. The journey started in the beginning of April, 1685 A.D. On the way paying homage to his elder's shrines at Keeratpur, he reached Nahan on April 14, 1685 A.D.

Raja of Nahan welcomed him with great pomp and show. First thing that

Guru did, on reaching Nahan was that he reconciled Medani Prakash and Fateh Chand. Raja Fateh Chand returned back the lands which he had forcibly annexed and became friend of Medani Prakash. Fateh Chand also met the Guru and stayed for many days with him.

Medani Prakash was very grateful of the Guru. He urged him to choose his abode in his territory, which the Guru accepted.



PAUNTA SAHIB

The Guru accepted the request of Raja Medani Prakash to stay for some time in Nahan state. He selected a very beautiful place on the banks of Jamuna. With the help of Raja a fort was constructed on that place for protection against enemies. The Guru laid the foundation stone of the fort, which was completed within twenty days. For the residence of the Guru and other Sikhs, houses were also constructed within the fort. When the people of Punjab came to know of Guru's new residence, they flocked to Paunta Sahib from far and near. Here also religious gatherings were held in the morning and evening and during the day the Sikhs showed feats of valour and physical power and skill. The new recruits were being given military training. The Sikhs who had been coming from far and near, to pay homage to Guru, were bringing with them gifts in the form of horses, guns, swords and other important weapons.

Here the Guru devoted himself to the composition of poetry. The charming and fascinating beauty of that place was very suitable for creative works. There were fifty two poets in the Darbar of Guru. Here the poetic symposiums were also held and the poets used to recite their new compositions. The Guru also narrated his new works in the Darbar. There were four writers who used to rewrite the Guru's works in beautiful hands, so that it might be available for the study of the other Sikhs. Here the Guru translated 'The Bhagwat Puran' into Hindi and completed some time in July, 1688 A.D.

While residing at Paunta Sahib the Guru evolved his plans for the completion of his God-ordained task. Here he gave message of Sikhism and inspired people to get ready for achieving liberation from the political and religious bondage. He asked the people to be ready to face all eventualities.

At Paunta Sahib Baba Ram Rae came and met Guru Gobind Singh. He requested the Guru to help him against the Masands who were getting more powerful and conceited. That proved to be true. As when Baba Ram Rae fell into a trance, the Masands declared him to be dead and cremated him forthwith. Then they took possession of his property. Panjab Kaur, wife of Baba Ram Rae rushed to Paunta Sahib and appraised Guru about the misdeeds of the Masands. She

also requested the Guru to visit the *Dera* of Baba Ram Rae. The Guru reached *Dera* with strong army of his Sikhs. He enquired about the whole situation and punished the guilty Masands severely.



THE KILLING OF A WHITE LION

While staying at Paunta Sahib the Guru had made a routine to go to the dense forests for hunting. There he used to kill the terrible and dangerous animals. These animals were generally leopards, panthers, man eaters and wild pigs.

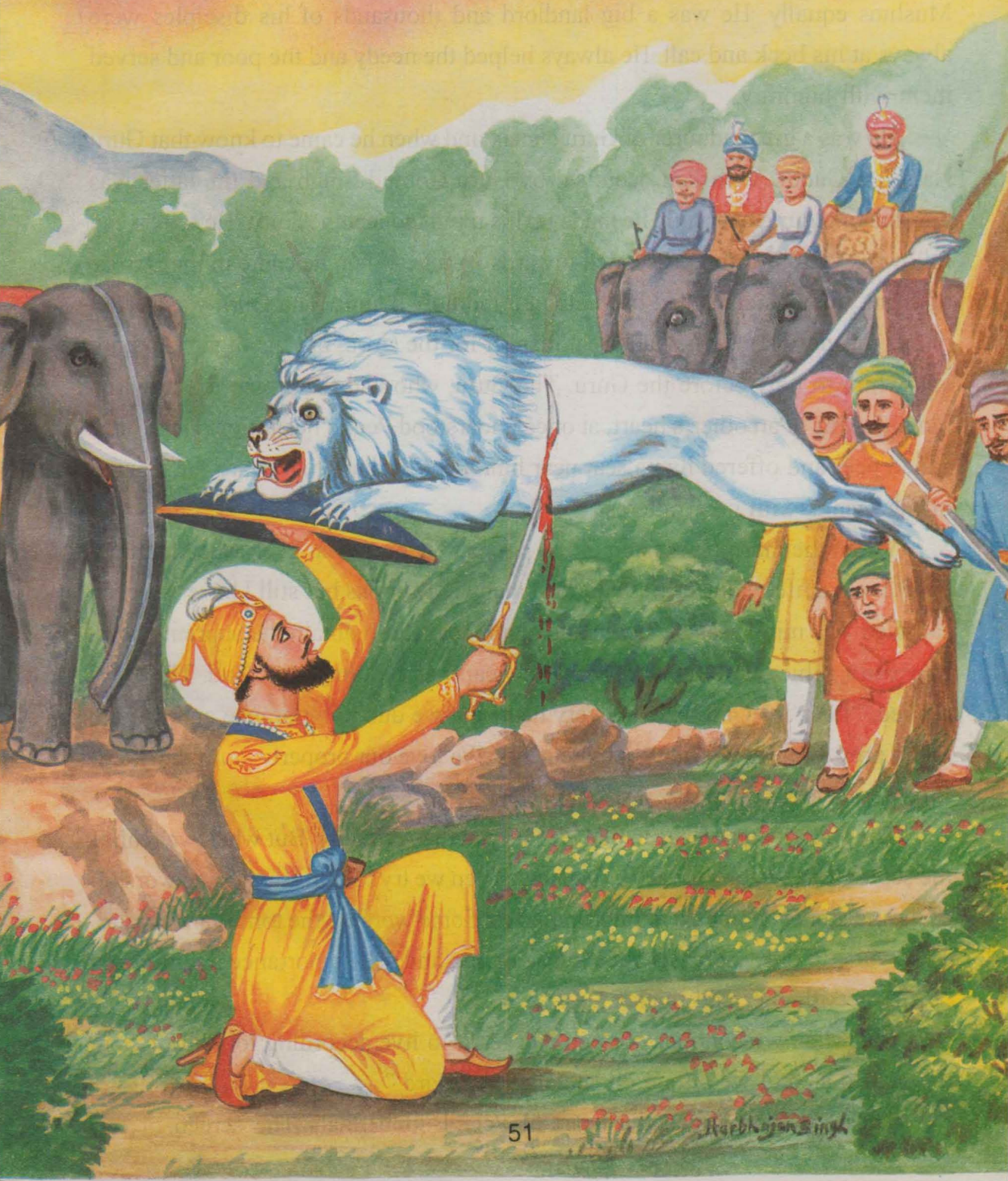
One day when Raja Fateh Chand and Raja Medani Prakash were staying with the Guru at Paunta Sahib, a news came that a white lion who had been converted into a man eater, was doing havoc among the people of the state. No body was daring to go to the forests. The men and women who had been going to the forests for grazing their cattle and for collecting wooden sticks, were generally victims of that lion. It was also informed that the lion had even killed more than two dozen young boys and girls.

The Guru at once ordered his men to bring a horse and weapons and set out towards the place where lion had been seen by the informer. Raja Fateh Chand and Raja Medani Prakash also accompanied him. Raja's also took with them their body guards who were carrying with them loaded guns and arrows and bows. They were afraid that without their body guards the lion might not attack them. The Guru was riding a horse, while the Raja's were sitting on their elephants. When they spotted that place, the lion on seeing them became conscious of their presence. The cruel beast got up and waited for the attack. The Guru asked the two Raja's and their body guards to kill the lion single-handed with the help of a sword and shield. But none dared to come forward.

The Rajas said, "It is impossible to kill the lion with a sword. It is not wise to face such a fierce beast single-handedly. We have loaded guns with us and we would kill the animal within minutes".

On hearing their reply the Guru got down from his horse, took his sword and shield and advanced towards the lion. He stopped in front of the lion and challenged him to come out. The lion saw fierously towards the Guru, but he did not attack. The Guru again challenged the lion. This time lion sprang forward and attacked the Guru. The Guru received his fore paws on the shield, caught in the left hand and with sword caught in his right hand cut the lion into two pieces.

All were stunned to see such a feat of the Guru. The Raja's acknowledged the Divine power of the Guru. They said, "It is no mere human power that has killed the animal, it is rather the power of God that has killed such a great lion".



PEER BUDHU SHAH

Peer Budhu Shah belonged to Sadhaura, a village about fifteen miles away from Paunta. He was a sufi faqir and was respected and loved by Hindus and Muslims equally. He was a big landlord and thousands of his disciples were always at his beck and call. He always helped the needy and the poor and served them with humility.

He was a great admirer of Guru Nanak and when he came to know that Guru Nanak's 'Gaddi' was then occupied by Guru Gobind Singh and the latter was then staying quite near him, he made up his mind to meet the Guru. He took some followers with him and proceeded towards Paunta. When he came in the Darbar of Guru, the musicians had been singing the holy hymns. The Guru was seated on his throne. Though he had great respect for the Guru, but his dignity did not allow him to bow before the Guru. The Guru, who had the power to know the inner desires of an other's heart, at once understood Peer's hesitation. He at once called peer and offered him a seat near him. Peer Budhu Shah heard the singing of the hymns with great interest.

When the morning session of the prayer was over then Peer asked Guru, "I have lived a life of austerities and read many holy books but still I have not been satisfied. My mind asks me again and again how can I obtain the supreme bliss, how can I achieve the final goal and how can I attain unity with God. The Guru replied, "Peer Ji ! God lives in every heart but we due to ignorance and ego are fallen prey to these worldly entanglements. We love our property, our family, our followers and our dignity.

The wall of ego comes in between us and the Almighty. But when we realise the separation, we feel ourself exhausted. Then we try to find Him. Some worship idols and stones. Some go to pilgrim places. Some worship the tombs and graves. This worship only increases their sense of ego and self-importance and the wall of ego gets thicker and thicker.

But when we conquer our ego and learn to live according to Will of God, the wall falls and we attune ourselves to the Lord."

These words pierced the heart of Peer Budhu Shah. The screen of ego

vanished and he falling on the feet of the Guru, said, "It have seen that 'Divine Light' for which I was wandering hither and thither. Today I have achieved my goal." Peer was completely conquered and became the perpetual disciple of the Guru.

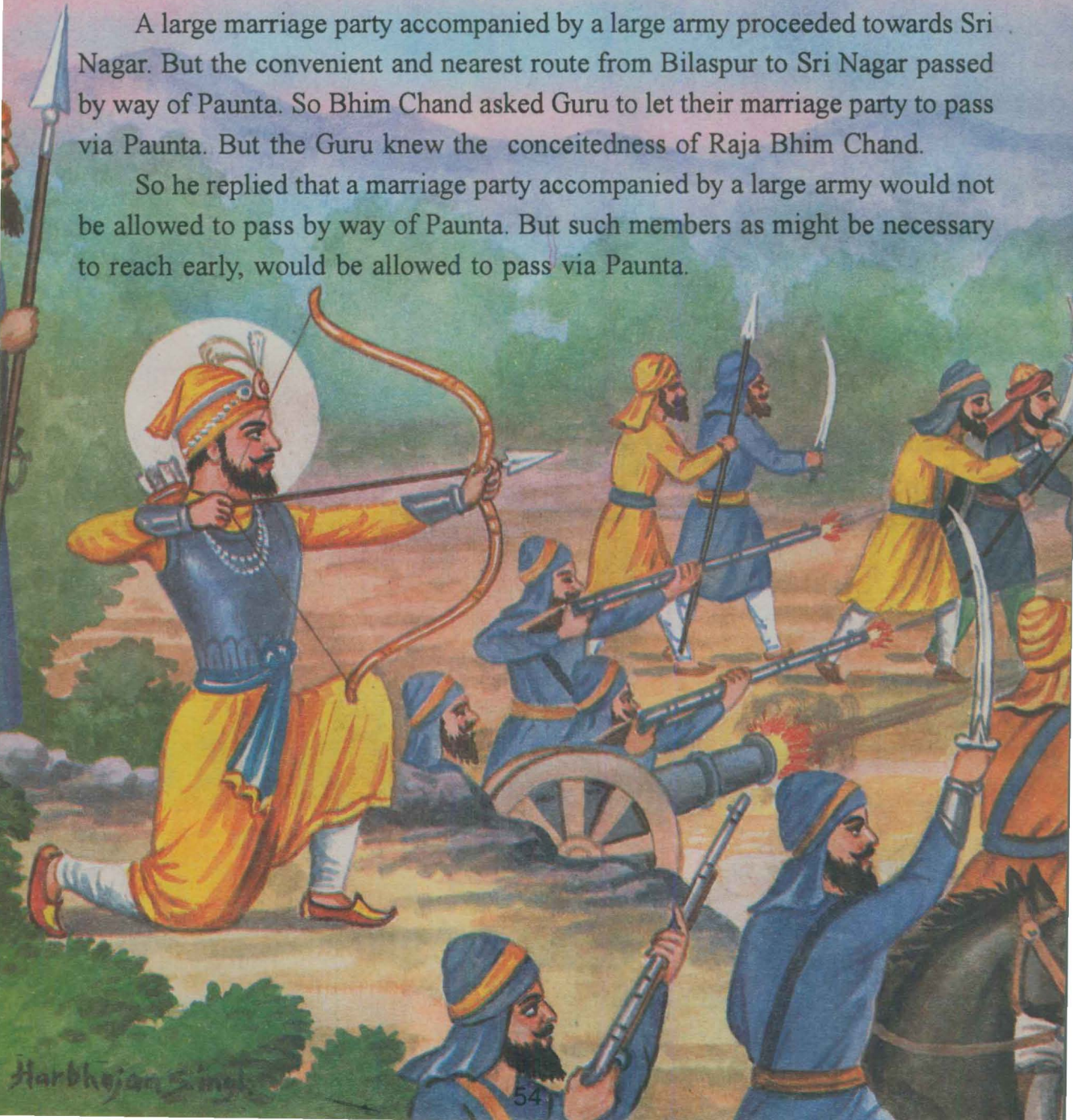


BATTLE OF BHANGAANI

Raja Fateh Chand invited Guru at the marriage ceremony of his daughter. His daughter was betrothed to the son of Raja Bhim Chand, who was considering the Guru as his enemy. So the Guru decided to send Diwan Nand Chand with precious marriage gifts for the princess. Diwan Nand Chand took with him some brave soldiers and reached Sri Nagar with the costly gifts.

A large marriage party accompanied by a large army proceeded towards Sri Nagar. But the convenient and nearest route from Bilaspur to Sri Nagar passed by way of Paunta. So Bhim Chand asked Guru to let their marriage party to pass via Paunta. But the Guru knew the conceitedness of Raja Bhim Chand.

So he replied that a marriage party accompanied by a large army would not be allowed to pass by way of Paunta. But such members as might be necessary to reach early, would be allowed to pass via Paunta.



So Raja Bhim Chand was forced to send his army by the longer route. Bridegroom and his party was allowed by the Guru to pass. Bhim Chand and other Rajas though went via the long route, but they felt very humiliated and they swore to take revenge. When they reached Sri Nagar they persuaded Fateh Chand to lead the attack on the Guru. Fateh Chand had no other alternative but to accept the advice of Bhim Chand as he was warned that if he would not agree, his daughter would be left.

When Diwan Nand Chand came to know of these new developments, they made good their escape with all the costly gifts. Bhim Chand's men intercepted them but the Sikhs fought bravely and reached Paunta. They told the Guru about the plannings of the hill-chiefs, so preparations were made to face the enemy.



The Guru had employed five hundred pathan soldiers on the recommendation of Peer Budhu Shah. When these Pathans came to know that the hill-chiefs were marching against the Guru they deserted the Guru. But when Peer Budhu Shah heard that the pathans had left at that critical time, he hurried to the Guru's help. He was accompanied by his two brothers, four sons and seven hundred disciples.

Five hundred udaasis who had been enjoying the delicious food served in the langar of the Guru, ran away during the night. One udaasi Mahant Kirpal stayed whom the Guru patted and said, "You have saved the root of udaasi Sikhs."

When the news of battle spread the Sikhs from all sides thronged to help the Guru. The Guru stationed his troops at the farther end of a level stretch of ground besides the river Jamuna about seven miles north of Paunta and near the village Bhangaani.

Raja Fateh Chand attacked the Guru with a combined army of all hill-chiefs. A severe battle was fought in which many soldiers were killed. The cattle grazers and confectioners who had never handled sword or shield fought like trained soldiers and killed many pathans and hill-men. Mahant Kirpal Chand killed Hayat Khan even with his club. After three days fight the pathans and hill-chiefs took to their heels.

Many prominent Sikhs were killed in the battle but the complete victory over the combined armies of the hill-chiefs gave a boost to the confidence and morale of the Sikhs.

BATTLE OF NADAUN

After winning the battle of Bhangaani, the Guru returned to Anandpur Sahib.

The hill-chiefs had not paid the tax to the emperor of Delhi since many years. Mian Khan Governor of Jammu sent his commander Alif Khan to collect the taxes. Alif Khan reached Nadaun via Kangra. From there he sent a message to Raja Bhim Chand that either he should pay the taxes or get ready for battle. The hill-chiefs gathered to consider the matter. A minister of Bhim Chand asked them to seek the advice of the Guru. The Guru advised them to resist the demand and be ready for the battle.

The Guru assured them that he would help them. With the help of the Guru, the hill-chiefs attacked at the army of Alif Khan. A bloody battle was fought at Nadaun in 1690 A.D. When Alif Khan found that his all commanders had been killed, he ran away to save his life. Then the Guru advised the hill-chiefs to remain united. He asked them to lay aside all fear and hesitation and to work for the cause of their country's freedom. Though the battle had been fought and won by the Guru and the Rajas together, but it was regarded by all as being the victory of the Guru.



MARRIAGE

It has been written by some historians that the Guru had three wives. But other writers argue that he had married only twice. They say that Jito was the original name of Guru's wife, as the practice even exists today, she was renamed as Sunderi after marriage by the Guru. After sometimes that two names came to suggest two persons and it was perceived that the Guru had two wives. The first marriage of the Guru took place on 23rd of Haar, Samvat 1734, with Mother Jito Ji, the daughter of Shri Harjas Rae resident of Lahore. This marriage was arranged at Guru Ka Lahore near Anandpur Sahib. Shri Harjas Rae had invited the marriage party to attend at Lahore, but the Guru due to rainy season asked his father-in-law to camp at Guru Ka Lahore near Bhakhra Nangal. The Guru Ka Lahore was converted in to Lahore. The Guru asked his disciples to reach at Guru Ka Lahore and to make suitable arrangements for the supply of all necessary articles.

Shri Harjas Rae reached Guru Ka Lahore with his kith and kin. The marriage ceremony was celebrated with great pomp and show and thousands of Sikhs and devotees enjoyed the happy occasion.

The so-called second marriage was performed with Mata Sahib Kaur daughter of Bhai Ramu, on Baisakh 18, Samvat 1757 B.k. Bhai Ramu who was a Bassi Khatri belonged to village Rohtaas in the district of Jehlam.

But this was not a marriage in the sense of the term 'marriage'. But still the marriage did take place. The actual story behind this marriage was this. On the occasion of a Baisakhi Congregation Bhai Ramu came to Anandpur Sahib to pay homage to the Guru. He also brought with him his daughter in a palanquin. He requested the Guru that he had betrothed his daughter with him since her infancy. As she had been dedicated to the Guru since her birth, so she had been called 'Mother' by all Sikhs. But when the Guru refused to accept her, Bhai Ramu said, "No one would now wed the Mother of Sikhs, there is left no place for her except your feet. Please accept her, she would be always at your service."

Then the Guru said, "Let then be her the Mother of Khalsa and let her serve them with a motherly affection. If she agrees to serve Khalsa, then you may leave her here."

Mata Sahib Kaur agreed to remain virgin all her life. Then the Guru consented

to take her into wedlock. But the marriage with Mata Sahib Devan was not a physical one. It was just a union of two souls in bonds of Divine Love.

On the occasion of baptism, the Sikhs are told that hence forth the name of their village is Anandpur, the name of their father is Guru Gobind Singh and the name of their 'Mother' is Sahib Kaur.

Thus Mata Sahib Kaur is 'Mother' of Khalsa Panth.



SAHIBZADAS

1. BABA AJIT SINGH

The Guru had four sons and the name of the eldest son was Baba Ajit Singh. He was born on 22nd Baisakh Samvat 1743 Bk. at Paunta Sahib. It is said that when the Guru had won the battle of Bhangaani and the Sikhs were enjoying the celebrations, the Sahibzada was born. As they had won the battle so he was named 'AJIT' (unconquerable). He obtained the training of a saint-soldier, from childhood. He was a great archer and excellent swordsman. He took part in battles since early life and astonished the Sikhs with his deeds of valour. He was a dauntless warrior and a humble saint.

When the Guru was forced to leave Anandpur, he was treacherously attacked by the Mughals, Baba Ajit Singh was asked to hold up the Mughals. Baba Ajit Singh fought bravely and stopped the advance of the enemy. During that period the Guru and Sikh army crossed the flooded Sirsa. When Baba Ajit Singh was ensured that the army had crossed, he also with his companions followed and joined the Guru's party. But millions of Mughals were behind them. So they were forced to take shelter in a *kacha* fortress in the village of Chamkaur Sahib. There Baba Ajit Singh while fighting for great cause died a saint-soldier's death on December 22, 1704 A.D.

2. BABA JUJHAR SINGH

Baba Jujhar Singh the second son of the Guru, was born on 14 Asuj Samvat 1747 (1690 A.D). He was also very brave and dauntless warrior. He also obtained the same training from childhood. He acquired a proficiency in the use of all modern weapons. He was also like his elder brother a great archer and excellent swordsman. When the Guru left Anandpur Sahib for good, he also accompanied him to Chamkaur Sahib.

When he saw that his elder brother had died fighting bravely against the Mughals, he also requested the Guru to allow him to go in the battle-field. He

said, "My dear father, though I am young, but being your son, I would kill thousands of Mughals. Please allow me." The Guru was pleased to hear these words of his son, he patted him and giving him five Singhs sent him to the battlefield. There he fought so bravely that Mughals were astonished at the deed of valour of a young boy of fourteen years. Killing a band of tyrants he died on December 22, 1704 A.D.

3. BABA ZORAWAR SINGH

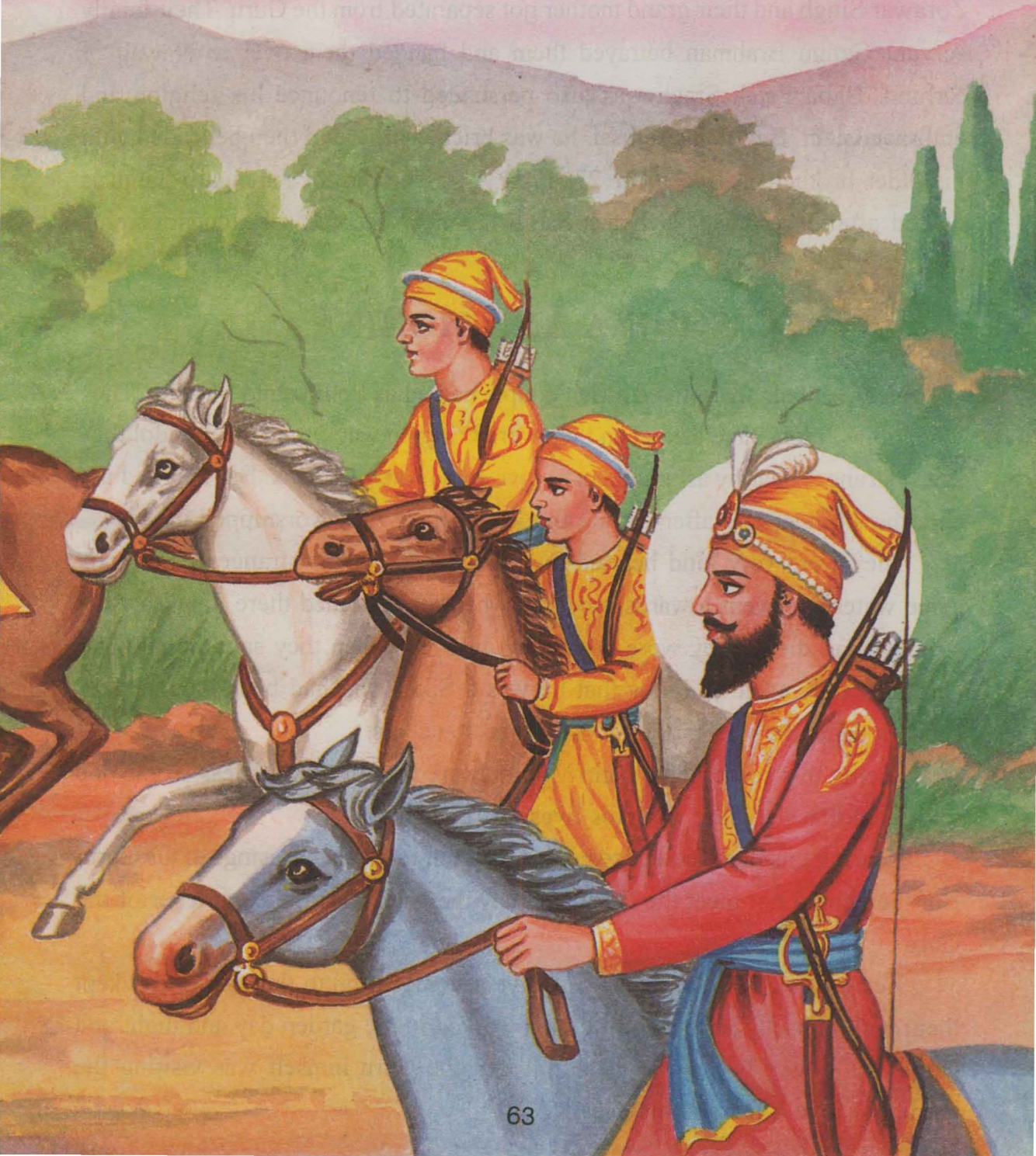
Baba Zorawar Singh the third son of Guru Gobind Singh Ji was born on 12 Saawan Samvat 1753 Bk. (1696 A.D.)

When Guru Gobind Singh evacuated the fort of Anandpur, he proceeded towards Ropar by way of Keeratpur and Nirmohgarh. When the party reached Sirsa they found that the stream was in flood, when they crossed the flooded stream, in confusion Mata Gujri, the Guru's mother and his two sons Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh got separated from the main party. In the biting winter wind of early morning, they travelled through a thick jungle. Some way off, they met their family cook, Gangu Brahman. He offered to give them shelter in his house. He kept them in the dark room of his house. One day when their grand-mother took them to the top of the house, Gangu stole away her pack of gold and jewellery. But when Mata Ji asked him about that pack he was enraged and informed Muhammadan Chaudhari of the village. Chaudhari at once went and informed the official of Morinda. He soon arrived and arrested the three and handed them over to Nawab of Sirhind. The Nawab confined them in the tower of his fort. Next day they were summoned before the Nawab. His minister Sucha Nand advised them to bow before the Nawab. But they did not bow. They were persuaded to embrace Islam but on their refusal to yield they were given time to think over. Next day they were again taken to court, they were again asked to embrace Islam but they rejected again. When Nawab was convinced that they would not yield, he ordered that they should be bricked alive and then beheaded. His orders were obeyed. A wall was erected round the two Sahibzadas, when they were buried upto their shoulders, their heads were severed from the body. This

event took place on Poh 13, 1761 Bk. (December 27, 1704 A.D.). Where their bodies were cremated, a Gurdwara called Joti Sarup stands there. The place where the two Sahibzadas were bricked and beheaded stands the Gurdwara, called Fatehgarh Sahib.



When the Guru reached village of Rae Kot in the guise of 'Uch da Peer' there he stayed with his trusted devotee Rae Kalha. From there he sent a messenger to Sirhind to enquire the fate of his mother and younger sons Baba Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh.



4. BABA FATEH SINGH

Baba Fateh Singh younger son of Guru Gobind Singh was born on Phagan Sudi 7, Samvat 1755 Bk. (February 1699). When the Guru and his party was attacked on the bank of Sirsa, Baba Fateh Singh along with his elder brother Zorawar Singh and their grand mother got separated from the Guru. Their family servant Gangu Brahman betrayed them and handed them over to Nawab of Sirhind. Baba Fateh Singh was also persuaded to renounce his religion and embrace Islam. But on his refusal, he was bricked alive and then beheaded with his elder brother on December 27, 1704 A.D. The city of Fatehgarh Sahib is named after his name. Fatehgarh Sahib has now become a headquarter of a district.

SOHINA AND MOHINA

Near Ambala there lived a rich couple named as Sohina and Mohina. They worshipped idols. One day when they were bringing water to bathe the idol they saw a stranger near by asking them to give some water to drink. But they did not care the stranger and after getting the idol bathed, they worshipped it.

They were very kind hearted they did not forget the stranger. They took some water and went towards him. But when they reached there, they saw the stranger had died. They were very much grieved, when they saw the stranger carefully, they came to know that he was a Sikh, who had been wounded by robbers, when he was trying to save some travellers.

Seeing this scene Sohina and Mohina were feeling very restless. Some one told them that the Guru of Sikhs lives at Anandpur.

Hearing this they decided to go to Anandpur to get the blessings of the Guru. But they could not meet the Guru One day they met Kesra, the gardener of the Guru.

Kesra was a very kind man. He gave accomodation to the couple and kept them with himself. Sohina and Mohina worked in the garden day and night and garden of flower became so beautiful that the Guru himself was visiting the garden to give a feast to his eyes.

When Sohina and Mohina came to know that birthday of Guru Gobind Singh was approaching near they thought that they would offer flowers of this garden to Guru in order to get blessing of the Guru.

There also lived a Faqir known as Roda Jalai. When he saw these beautiful flowers he made up his mind to offer these flowers to Guru in order to win favour of the Guru.

When he asked Mohina and Sohina for some flowers, they refused frankly, as they wanted to offer all these flowers to the Guru. When Roda Jalai heard their reply, he entered in the garden early in the morning and stole all the flowers. When Mohina and Sohina came to know about this, they were grieved very much.

Next day Roda Jalai took the stolen flowers and placed before the Guru with great reverence. But the Guru who had a penetrating mind had already perceived the truth. The Guru said, why have you plucked these beautiful flowers. It is not a suitable act for the faqirs of your calibre.

Roda Jalai said, "I am a faqir, I have no money with me so I have brought these flowers to offer you." But when Roda Jalai bowed before the Guru to pay his obeisance, his cap fell on the ground and a number of golden Mohars, which he kept in his cap also scattered on the ground. The Sangat which was sitting near by ridiculed him. When Guru Ji came to know that Roda Jalai had stolen the flowers from the garden of Mohina and Sohina he picked up the flowers and met Sohina and Mohina and blessed them gracefully. Mohina and Sohina became very happy and told the whole story of a wounded Sikh. After that they became Sikhs of the Guru.

BIRTH OF THE KHALSA

A few days earlier of Baisakhi of Samvat 1756, Guru Ji sent messages to his Sikhs all over India and other countries including Kabul and Kandhar to attend the Baisakhi festival. On receiving the call of the Guru, millions of Sikhs from all over the country thronged towards Anandpur Sahib. Big groups poured every day. The Guru felt very happy on seeing the mighty hosts who had been gathering day by day.

On the day of Baisakhi a big and a beautiful tent was set up at the place of Keshgarh Sahib. Behind the throne of the Guru, a small but beautiful tent was also erected. Priests were chanting the Asa-di-Vaar and the Divine music lifted the audience to celestial height. All eyes were anxiously waiting to have a glimpse of their dear Guru. At last the Guru entered inside the tent, all people were amazed to see him. His eyes were shining like fire, his face was glowing with a celestial bliss, his naked sword was glittering in his uplifted right hand and his whole body was looking like that of a great warrior, who had just rushed into the battle field.

In stead of sitting on the throne, brandishing his sword high in the air he said with a thundering voice, "This goddess, Bhagauti is always hungry for the heads, today she wants the heads of my dear Sikhs. Is there any one among my Sikhs who is ready to lay down his life at a call from me?"

On hearing this call from their Guru, a dead silence prevailed all over the Darbar. None dared to face the Guru, all were seeing towards each other, err the Guru might not read their faces.

The Guru called forth again, but there was no response. Then the voice of Guru, grew more terrible and he angrily asked for the third time.

At last a Sikh rose up and said, "O true Lord! my head is always at your service, pardon me true Guru, I have wavered a bit. I would be very happy if this my worthless head could taste the eternal bliss of your Bhagauti." The name of this Sikh was Bhai Daya Ram, a resident of Lahore.

The Guru caught him by his arm and took him into that small tent, which was set up behind his throne. Then the people heard a severe blow

of the sword and a stream of blood rushed out of the tent. After a dead silent pause, the Guru Ji again rushed out of the tent, with his sword dripping with blood and in the same voice demanded another head. Dead silence again prevailed, but this time Bhai Dharam Chand of Delhi stood up without any hesitation and offered his head.

Similarly, Bhai Dharam Chand was dragged into the tent and he met the same fate. When the Guru came for the third time with his blood dripped sword, then Bhai Mohkam Chand resident of Dwarka, offered his head gladly to please his Lord. The Guru took him by arm and the same way dragged him into the tent with great hurry and ruthlessness. The congregation again heard the fall of blow and saw the blood streaming out.

When the Guru came for the fourth time with the same sword dripping with blood then Bhai Sahib Chand of Bidar stood up and touching Guru's



feet said, O my Lord ! I am very unlucky and I have taken so long a time to make up my mind. Pardon me and accept my head.

But the Guru did not care to see towards his face, in great hurry he dragged him into the tent. Another blow of the sword and a fresh flow of blood confirmed the congregation that the fourth Sikh too had been eliminated.

When the Guru again came with his powerful Bhagauti in his hand and asked for an other head, then Bhai Himmat Rae of Jagan Nath at once rose up and requested the Guru to grant him the immortal death. He said, "I would be very fortunate if my head quenches the thirst of your Bhagauti, this body will not last long. It would fall on one day but if it falls in the hands of my master then my soul would certainly be freed of the worldly bonds.

The Guru also dragged him into the small tent and he also met the same consequences. All heard same type of sound of falling the sword and similar fresh stream of blood flowing from the tent.

The Sikhs who were sitting out were again seeing towards each other as if searching the face of the next target. There were some who had made up their minds to sacrifice their heads without further delay. But that time the Guru stayed longer in the tent.

But when he came out people were amazed and astonished to see such a change. The Guru had sheathed his sword, his face was cheerful and satisfied. But the Guru was not coming alone, there were five others, who were looking like him. They were those 'five' who had offered their heads to the Guru.

They were all wearing beautiful long robes and saffron coloured turbans. In appearance they were like the Guru in all departments. Those five had given their heads to the Guru and he had given them his glory and illumination.

The Guru then occupied his seat and addressed the gathering. Then he took pure water in an iron pot and kneeling beside it he kept stirring the water with 'Khanda' and recited the Divine Verses. When the Divine Song and steel of the Guru was dissolved then the mother of Khalsa poured sugar

crystals into it. Then the Guru again stirred the sacred water so that sugar crystals might be dissolved into it. This sacred water was then called as Nectar or Amrit.

The Guru then stood up with the steel pot of Nectar in his both hands. He asked the five disciples to kneel in a soldierly fashion. Then the Guru looked into the eyes of each disciple and threw showers of Amrit on their face and in the knots of their hair. That is why every hair of Sikh is considered sacred for all times. Then he asked them to take the deep draughts of the Nectar from the steel pot.

Thus those 'five' were baptized by Guru. They had been called '**Panj Payaras**' or five Beloved Ones. Then the Guru said, "From today you belong to Khalsa nation. All your previous castes are erased now. Now you all belong to one family, one nation and one country. You should now be pure in heart, thought, word and deeds. Now you have become fearless, brave and saints. It is now your duty to serve the poor and downtrodden. Now you shall worship none but God. My Sikh will never worship stones, idols, tombs, gods or goddesses."

Then the Guru asked the Panj Payaras to prepare the Amrit as had been prepared earlier. When the Amrit was prepared, the Guru asked the Panj Payaras to administer baptism to him. They were perplexed at that proposal and expressed their unworthiness to do the task.

But the Guru bowed before them and said, "The Khalsa is the Guru and Guru is Khalsa, there is a no difference between you and me." The Guru thus received Amrit from the five Beloved Ones and said, "From today you are all lions and yours names will now end with word Singh." The Guru himself changed his name from Gobind Rae to Gobind Singh. After that the Guru invited others to receive baptism.

Within a few days thousands of Sikhs were baptized. After receiving Amrit they were changed into lion hearted Khalsa from mere humble servants. The Guru made them take an oath to keep the five Ks' namely kes (hair), kangha (comb), kirpan (dagger), kachha (short drawers) and kara (steel bracelet)

FIVE BELOVED ONES

Those five Sikhs who had offered their heads to the Guru at his amazing call were honoured by the Guru naming them as his five 'Beloved Ones'. These five Beloved Ones have become immortal in the history of Sikhs. When ever and where ever the Sikhs pray to God, the names of these five Beloved Ones are remembered. One essential matter which is very important to understand is that those five Beloved Ones did not belong to one province or one caste. They represented all India and five different castes. From that it is evident that the Guru considered whole India as his home and he wanted to infuse courage and confidence in the hearts of victims of tyranny and oppression.

Brief life sketches of these five Beloved Ones are given as under:-

1. BHAI DAYA SINGH

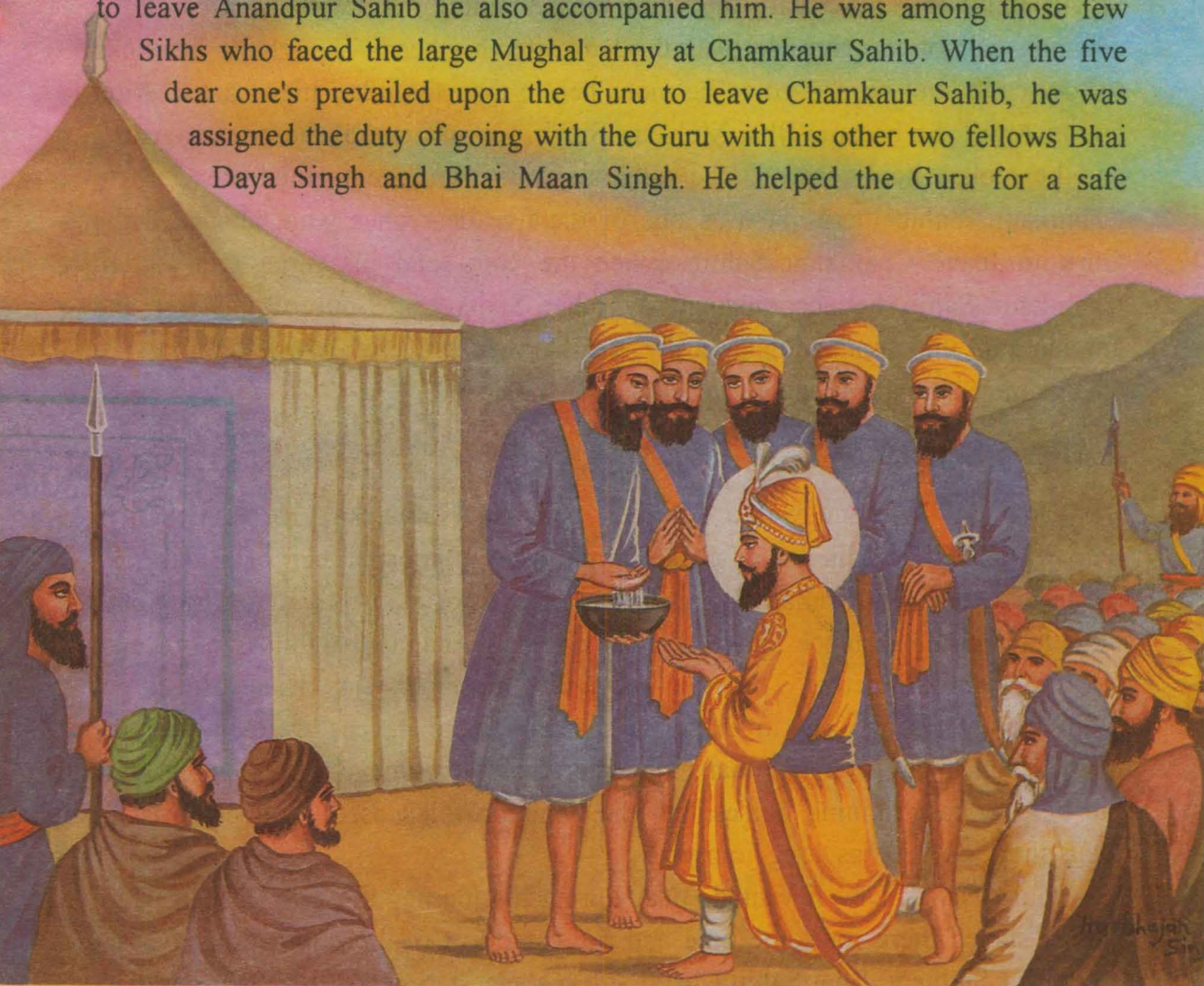
Bhai Daya Singh belonged to Lahore, an important city of Punjab. He was born in samvat 1726 Bk. The name of his father was Sri Sudha Khatri and his mother's name was Srimati Diali. On the day of Baisakhi when the Guru ji asked his true followers to lay down their lives at his call, he was first Sikh to offer his head. With a smile on his face he said, "O my true Lord ! my head is always at your service. You have taught us that those who desire to play the game of love, should come with their heads on their palms. If we want to choose this path, we should be ready to part with our heads in absolute joy and serenity. So according to your wish I am ready to part with my head and I happily offer it to quench the thirst of your Bhagauti."

After taking Amrit, he was baptized as Bhai Daya Singh. Later he turned to be a great warrior and was a trustworthy commander of Sikh forces. He followed the Guru to the end of his life and participated bravely in all Guru's religious wars. He accompanied the Guru in the battle of Chamkaur Sahib. When in December 1704 AD, the Guru was requested to leave Chamkaur Sahib the Five Singhs assigned to Bhai Daya Singh the duty of going with the Guru. Bhai Daya Singh performed his duty very efficiently and helped the Guru to reach Dina Kangar. At Dina Kangar, the Guru wrote a letter to king Aurangzeb. This letter was called as Zafarnama. It was Bhai Daya Singh who took the Zafarnama to Aurangzeb in the Deccan. After meeting Aurangzeb he also presented the message of Aurangzeb to the Guru. He stayed with Guru at Talwandi Sabo and helped him in compiling his literary and religious works.

He accompanied the Guru while going to Nanded, Deccan, and always served him with great devotion. He died at Nanded in Samvat 1756 Bk.

2. BHAI DHARM SINGH

Bhai Dharm Dass belonged to Hastinapur (Delhi). He was born there in Samvat 1723 Bk. The name of his father was Sri Sant Ram, who was Jat by caste. His mothers' name was Srimati Sabho. On the day of Baisakhi Samvat 1756 i.e. on April 13, 1699 at Keshgarh Sahib, when the Guru asked his Sikhs to offer their heads at his call, Bhai Dharm Dass was the second to be ready to sacrifice himself. On taking Amrit, he was baptized as Bhai Dharm Singh. He proved to be the very brave soldier and he remained with the Guru to the end of his life. He fought heroically in all religious wars. When the Guru was forced to leave Anandpur Sahib he also accompanied him. He was among those few Sikhs who faced the large Mughal army at Chamkaur Sahib. When the five dear one's prevailed upon the Guru to leave Chamkaur Sahib, he was assigned the duty of going with the Guru with his other two fellows Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Maan Singh. He helped the Guru for a safe



destination. He was among those five devotees who took the palanquin of the Guru on their shoulders and declared him as 'Sach da Peer.' He accompanied Bhai Daya Singh, when he went to Deccan to deliver the Zafarnama to king Aurangzeb. He also went with the Guru to Nanded and always served him with great devotion. He died at Nanded in samvat 1765 Bk.

3. BHAI MOHKAM SINGH

Bhai Mohkam Chand was born in Dwarka (Gujrat) in Samvat 1720 Bk. The name of his father was Sri Tirath Ram who was a washerman by caste. When he heard of the Baisakhi congregation of Samvat 1756, he marched towards Anandpur Sahib by foot. After walking thousand of miles, he reached Anandpur Sahib a few days earlier. On seeing the Guru, he was captivated and he made up his mind to remain with the Guru the remaining period of his life. At the amazing call of the Guru he was third to offer his head. Though he belonged to low caste, but he proved to be more heroic than the other high castes. After taking Amrit, he became Bhai Mohkam Singh. He was one of the brave warriors and he took a heroic part in the religious wars. He accompanied the Guru to Chamkaur Sahib there he was one of the five dear ones who persuaded the Guru to leave Chamkaur Sahib. When the Guru and his three fellows left Chamkaur Sahib he accompanied by other Sikhs came out of the fort and challenging the great Mughal army fought very bravely. While fighting at Chamkaur Sahib he died on December 2, 1704 AD.

4. BHAI SAHIB SINGH

Bhai Sahib Chand was a jeweller of Bidar (Karnataka). He was born in Samvat 1719 Bk. His father Sri Chamna was a poor barber of Bidar. His mother's name was Srimati Sonabai. The Karnataka state is situated in South of India and the distance between Bidar city and Anandpur Sahib is more than two thousand kilometers. To-day in the age of machinery this distance does not seem beyond reach. But in those days such long distances were beyond the imagination of an ordinary man. The rulers used to achieve these targets with the help of fast running horses, but the common folks used bullock-carts for their short as well as long journeys.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited Bidar during his journey towards Deccan. Guru Nanak stayed there for some time and a greater part of the population of Bidar embraced Sikhism. Bhai Sahib Chand and his ancestors were also great admirers

of Guru Nanak and his successors.

When the people of Bidar came to know about the Baisakhi programme of Anandpur Sahib, they flocked towards Anandpur Sahib. On reaching Anandpur Sahib, they were astonished to see the splendour of Guru Gobind Singh. Bhai Sahib Chand completely surrendered himself for the cause of the Guru.

On day of Baisakhi, at the amazing call of the Guru, Bhai Sahib Singh was the fourth Sikh to offer his head. On taking Amrit, he became Bhai Sahib Singh. He accompanied the Guru to the last and participated bravely in all his religious wars. He died while fighting at Chamkaur Sahib on December 22, 1704 AD.

5. BHAI HIMMAT SINGH

Bhai Himmat Rae was born at Jagannath (Orissa) in Samvat 1718 Bk. His father Sri Gulab Rae was a water carrier (jheewar) by caste. The name of his mother was Srimati Dhanno Devi. Guru Nanak Dev had visited Jagannath during his Udaasis. The people of Jagannath had great faith and reliance on Guru Nanak and his successors. When the residents of Jagannath received the message of the Guru about the celebration of a rare and extraordinary Baisakhi, they became very keen and eager to visit Anandpur Sahib. Thousands of devotees of the Guru marched towards Anandpur Sahib riding on their horses and bullock-carts. On reaching Anandpur Sahib, they found that millions of devotees had been gathered to celebrate the Baisakhi festival. They saw that thousand of tents were erected every where and a free kitchen was on the service of the devotees for twenty four hours. They were also charmed and bewitched to see the splendour of their Guru. On the day of birth of Khalsa when the Guru ji called for the fifth head then Bhai Himmat Rae aged thirty eight years rose and bowed his head before the Guru and said, "My Lord! my head is at your disposal, I will be very happy if it serves you. One day it will fall under the stroke of death. But the death received under the stroke of your pious sword will help me to cross the worldly ocean."

After taking Amrit he was baptized as Bhai Himmat Singh. He was very brave and strong. He served the Guru to the end of his life. He took part bravely in all the religious wars. When the Guru was forced to evacuate the fort of Anandpur Sahib on the night between the 20th and 21st of December he accompanied the Guru to Chamkaur Sahib. There he died a saint-soldier's death on December 22, 1704 A.D.

BRAVE DEEP KAUR

The process of baptism was not confined to men alone, the Guru had raised women to a position of equality with men. The woman was not considered as mere shoes to be thrown off when worn out. The Sikh history is full of such examples, when weak and powerless women, after taking Amrit, were converted into brave lionesses, men and women were taking Guru's Amrit together and a spirit of heroism descended on them. In Sikh history there is one such example of Bibi Deep Kaur, who displayed manly strength and courage.

Once a jatha of Majha Sikhs was going to Anandpur Sahib. This jatha also included a young baptized woman. Her name was Bibi Deep Kaur. When the Jatha reached the village Talabban, they saw a well. They halted round well in order to drink water and to refresh themselves for a while. But as Bibi Deep Kaur was not feeling thirsty, she continued to march on. When she had gone some yards away from his companions, four armed Muhammadans saw her. Finding her alone, they decided to loot her. They rushed towards her and ordered her to stop. When she stopped, they commanded her to hand over all her belongings to them. But Bibi Deep Kaur was not an ordinary Indian woman, she displayed the gallant Sikh spirit. As she was also armed, she was not afraid of them. With a healthy presence of mind, she threw one of her gold bangle on the ground. When one of the dacoits bent down to pick up the bangle, she took her sword and severed away his head with in no time. When the other three saw that horrible scene, they were completely bewildered. They were of two minds, either to fight with her or to run away. But before they could make up their decision, she killed the other two with her powerful sword. When the fourth tried to run away, she wounded him while changing and felled him on the ground. Then Bibi Deep Kaur sat on his chest and pierced her sword into his heart.

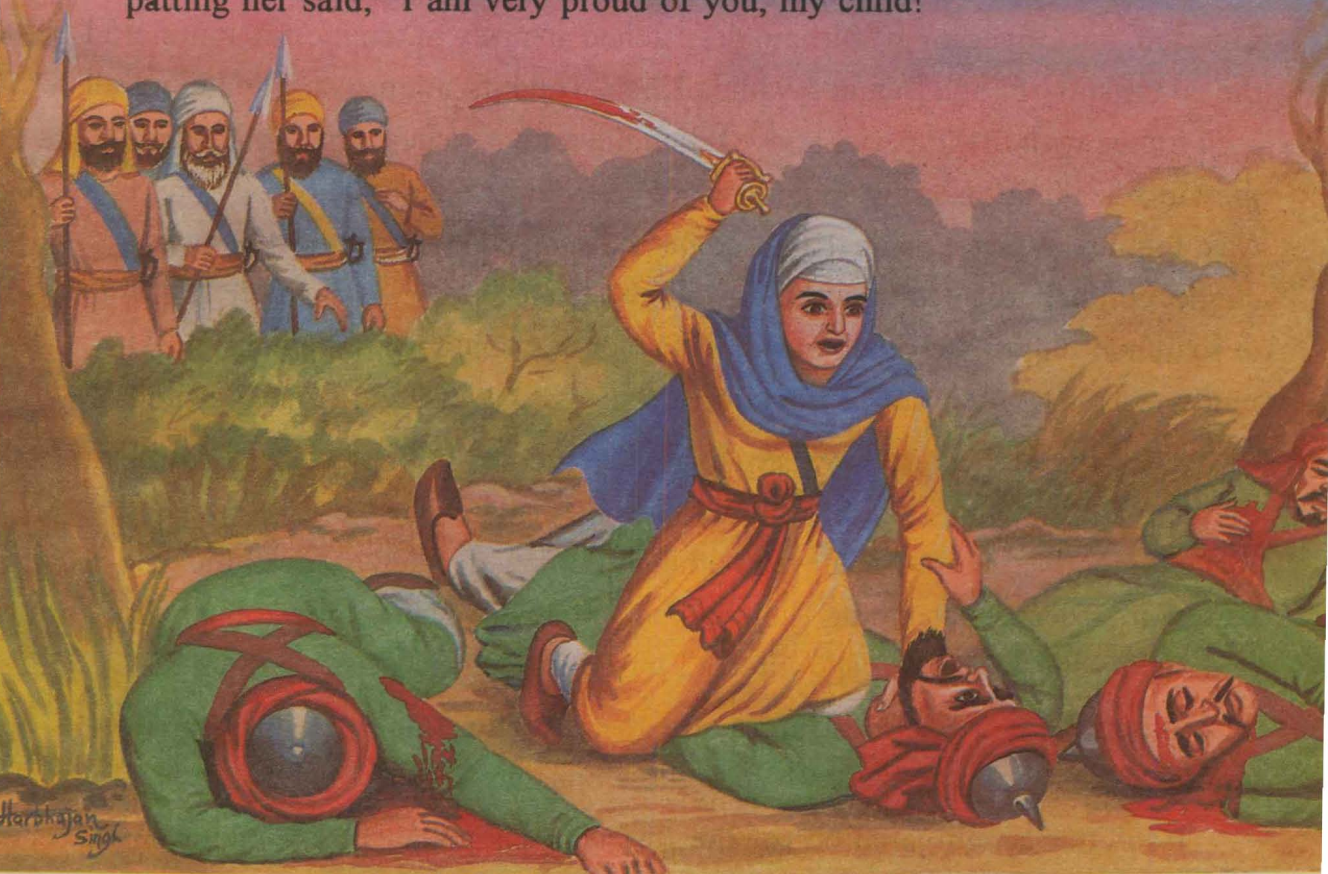
When she was sitting on the chest of the dacoit her other members of the jatha reached there. They were stunned to see the courage and swordsmanship of Bibi Deep Kaur.

They found that Bibi Deep Kaur was unhurt but the four dacoits were

despatched to the next world. Some of their companions praised her and thanked the Great Guru for her safety, but some party men had some objections for her such deed. They thought that while sitting on the chest of the Muslim, she had polluted herself.

Within few days the Jatha reached Anandpur Sahib. They narrated the whole incident to Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru was very much pleased to hear such bravery of his devotee. But the members of the party, who had some objections against this act of Bibi Deep Kaur said, "O True Guru, though she has done a great deed of bravery but by touching the Muslim, she has polluted herself. Now she is not worthy to live with us."

On hearing this, the Guru smiled and said, "She has not been polluted, but your thoughts are polluted. A man having such polluted and worthless thoughts can't be my Sikh. This my brave daughter have not only saved her honour and dignity but has purified herself. Now no pollution can effect her. She has set up an example to infuse courage into others." Then the Guru patting her said, "I am very proud of you, my child!"



BHAI BACHITTAR SINGH

One day when the Guru had gone for hunting excursion, he was suddenly attacked by the hill-chiefs. Though the Guru had a very small number of soldiers with him, they fought back bravely and not only repulsed the attack but even killed a hill-chief. One hill-chief lost his arm. The Guru's arrows never missed their target and pierced through the breasts of many enemies. When the hill-soldiers found the dead body of their chief, they took to their heels.

This defeat frightened the hill-chiefs. They met at one place to sort out new plans. They all agreed to expel the Guru from their neighbourhood. But they also knew the power of the Guru. They perceived very well that even the combined force of all the hill-chiefs could not face the Guru. So they decided to ask for the help of the Mughal Army.

They requested Nawab of Sirhind for help. After getting Emperor's sanction, the Governor of Sirhind despatched an army of ten thousand under the command of Dina Beg and Painda Khan. The hill-chiefs also joined their own forces with the imperial army. When the army reached Anandpur Sahib, the Guru leading his army came forward to face the enemy. A bloody battle was fought. When Painda Khan advanced and challenged the Guru to a single combat, the Guru accepted his challenge and with a single arrow despatched him to the other world. Dina Beg was badly wounded seeing the tenderness and delicacy of the situation the hill-chiefs fled from the field.

The hill-chiefs were now certain that they could not defeat the Guru in the field. So they made up their mind to invade the city. They blocked the city for two months, but they achieved nothing. So they decided to break the gate of fort in order to occupy it. They intoxicated an elephant, covered his body and head with iron-plates and directed him against the gate of the fort.

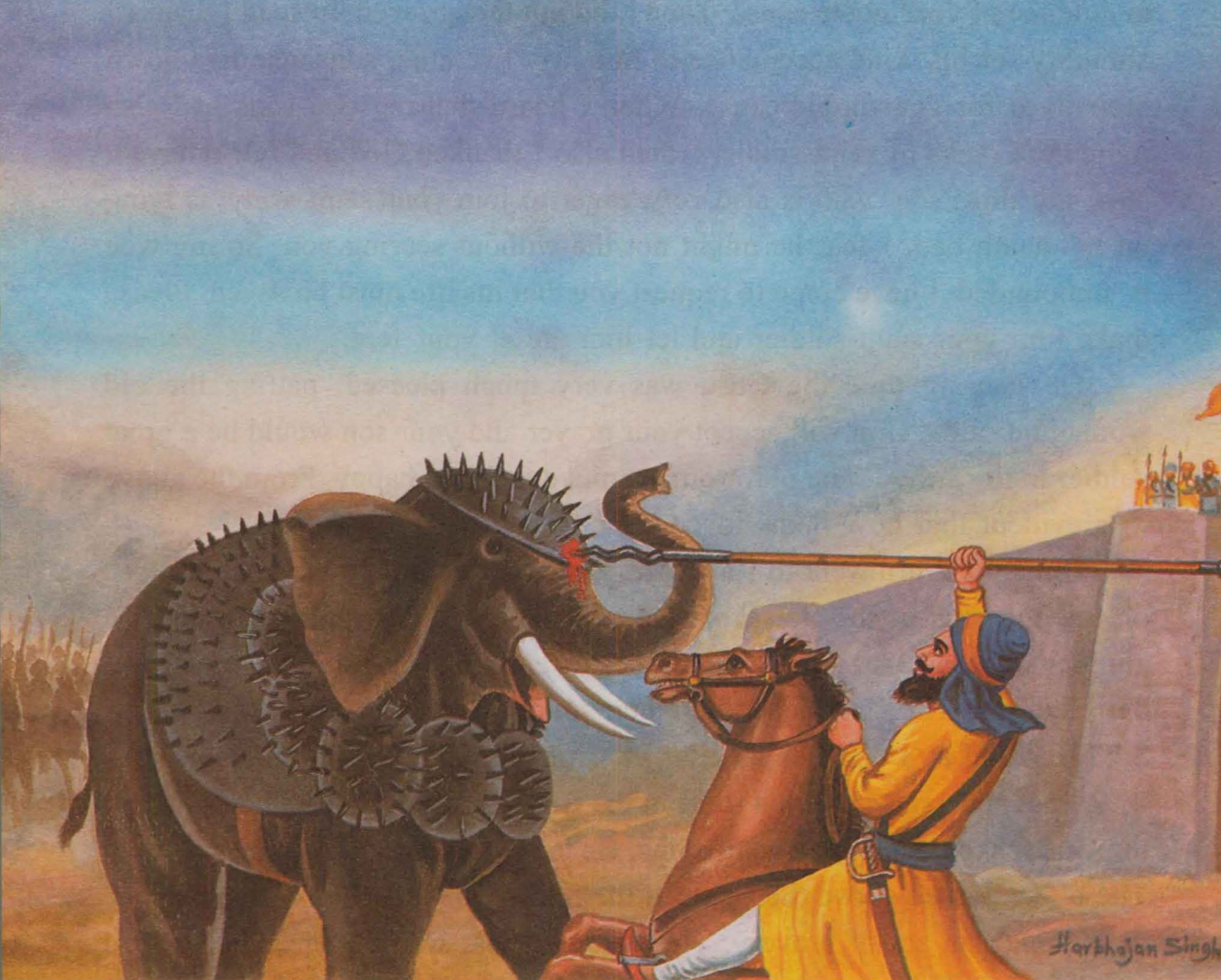
When the Guru got this information he asked his one trusted and brave soldier Bhai Bachittar Singh to face the elephant.

Bachittar Singh came out of the fort with his gallant horse taking his

great lancer in his right hand and gave such a powerful blow to the face of the elephant that it pierced through the steel armour. The severely wounded elephant turned round and ran about killing his own army men. Bachittar Singh pursued the elephant crying loudly. Then the Khalsa army also fell on the hill-chiefs. The hill army took to their heels and ran away in all directions to save their lives.

The Guru was very much pleased to see the bravery of Bhai Bachittar Singh. He tapped him lovingly and gave him a beautiful sword as a symbol of honour.

The lancer with which Bhai Bachittar Singh wounded the intoxicated elephant, is kept in the fort of Keshgarh at Anandpur Sahib.



THE GURU AND THE SIKHS

The Sikhs were loving their Guru to such an extent that they were ever ready to sacrifice their lives even on the minor hint or call. Some Sikhs dedicated their sons from birth to the Guru's Cause. These dedicated soldiers were trained in the use of different types of weapons. Mothers and wives happily sent their sons and husbands to serve the Guru.

There is an anecdote that one day an old Sikh lady attended the Darbar of the Guru. She was weeping and crying. The Guru called her and asked her the reason of bewailing. She said, "My Lord! My agony is unbearable. My husband was at your service, he sacrificed his life while fighting bravely in defence of your noble cause. Then I did not feel grieved, instead I thanked almighty for his kind acceptance of him. My two elder sons also laid down their lives for your noble cause. When I heard that my two sons had also joined the ranks of saint-soldiers, then also I thanked God and felt relieved. Now my third son, who is also very eager to join your saint army, is lying on his death bed. I fear he might not die without serving you. So my woe is unbounded. I have come to request you that his life must be saved. Please make him your saint-soldier and let him die at your feet."

On hearing this, the Guru was very much pleased, patting the old woman he said, "God will accept your prayer and your son would be a great soldier in my army." The old woman smiled and felt happy. From the above it is evident that how Sikhs loved their Guru.

Once the Guru went to Rawalsar, where all the hill-chiefs had gathered on the occasion of the Baisakhi festival. There one day a Sikh presented a number of weapons to the Guru. These weapons included a beautiful two barreled gun. The Guru loaded the gun and in order to test it asked his one Sikh to stand at a distance as a target. At once many Sikhs ran to serve as the target and each struggled to be in the front. In order to stop their quarrel, the Guru asked them to stand in a line. He loaded the gun, took aim and fired. The bullet passed above the heads of the Sikhs. The hill-chiefs were stunned to see such an act of bravery. They thought that who could defeat such a Guru whose Sikhs are always ready to lay down their lives.

BHAI GHANHAIYA JI

The hill-chiefs were always at logger heads with the Guru. They were always planning to harm him. Once the Guru visited Kurukshetra on the auspicious occasion of solar eclipse. Most of the hills-chiefs were also present there. When they came to know that the Guru had at the most hundred soldiers with him, they planned to capture him on his way back to Anandpur Sahib. When they were thinking about their future designs, they heard that two Muslim generals, Sayyad Beg and Alif Khan, with an army of ten thousand, were marching from Delhi to Lahore. As they were not far from Kurukshetra, so hill-chiefs decided to hire them and send them to attack the Guru. They agreed to pay them two thousand rupees per day. When the Guru reached Chamkaur the two generals invaded him. A severe battle was fought. General Sayyad Beg was already admirer of the Guru. When he saw the Guru, his heart desisted him from fighting against the saint of God. With his followers he joined the Guru's army. The desertion of Sayyad Beg, discouraged Alif Khan and he retreated back.

This defeat demoralized the hill-chiefs and they sent another representation to Aurangzeb for help. The Emperor accepted their request and sent general Sayyad Khan with a large army to capture the Guru. Sayyad Khan was brother-in-law of Sayyad Budhu Shah. He had already heard about the spiritual powers



of the Guru, he was perplexed and dazzled to see the Guru, he had come to capture the Guru, but the spiritual power of Guru captured him. He got down from the horse and touched the Guru's stirrup with his head.

When Sayyad Khan left the army, general Ramzan Khan led the charge with great fury. Seeing a large army, the Guru considered it wise to retire to the fort. The royal army plundered the city and encamping a few miles off the city spent the night in feastings. When they were in deep sleep, the Sikhs under the command of prince Ajit Singh invaded the imperial army. The Sikhs took back the booty which the royal army had looted, the camp also fell into the hands of the Khalsa.

In this horrible battle there was also a man who had not been taking part in killings or wounding the enemy, but was serving all without any discrimination. The name of that Saint was Bhai Ghanhaiya Ji.

Bhai Ghanhaiya belonged to village Sodra in district of the Gujranwala (Pakistan). He was Guru's devout Sikh and had a very delicate and kind heart. His peace loving nature desisted him from becoming a soldier. But being a beloved Sikh of the Guru, he wanted to serve him one way or the other. So he learnt the art of rendering first aid to the wounded. He organized an ambulance band who were serving the wounded in the battle-field. When and where ever fighting took place he would take his men with him. He served the water and provided other necessary help to the wounded. He dressed their wounds and also helped them to reach their camps. He was serving the friends and enemies alike.

One day few Sikhs complained to the Guru that Bhai Ghanhaiya was giving first aid and water to the wounded enemies and Sikhs alike. They also accused him that practically he was helping the enemy, as the soldiers, who had been cured by him, were again becoming fit to face the Sikhs. The Guru called Bhai Ghanhaiya and asked him about the accusations ascribed by other Sikhs. Bhai Ghanhaiya said, "My Lord! it is true, I provide water and first aid to all wounded persons though they might be Turks or Sikhs. But actually I am neither serving Sikhs nor Turks, I have been serving you. Your teachings have opened my mind and I see you in every human body which lies wounded on the battle field. So I am supplying water and providing first aid to none else, but you."

The Guru was very much pleased to hear this answer and he stood up and patting him said, "Bhai Ghanhaiya, you are great, you have achieved your target, you have crossed the worldly ocean and now have been exempted from further transmigration. In those days red cross societies did not exist, so Bhai Ghanhaiya is claimed to be the pioneer of red cross

SIEGE OF ANANDPUR

When the generals of the royal army found their soldiers being killed in large numbers they lost the hope of defeating the Sikhs in the open field. Therefore they made up their minds to besiege and blockade the fort and to cut off all supplies.

When the cordon continued for many days its effects began to be felt in the fort. The Sikhs and Guru's family began to starve and precious animals died for want of food. Though Sikhs bore hunger and hardships for a long time but still they did not lose their hearts, they had come there to sacrifice their lives for cause of great mission.

When the long siege did not bear any fruit the royal army and hill-chiefs were also worried. They had also to feed a big army and in those days the means of supply in such hilly areas were not easy. So they tried to persuade the Guru to vacate the fort. They requested the Guru to evacuate Anandpur Sahib. They also swore on the cow and the Quran that their promises were genuine and would be kept in true faith.



But the Guru knew the treacherous plans of the hill-men and the Turks. When a number of Sikhs and Guru's mother asked the Guru to accept the enemies offer, then the Guru agreed to demonstrate to them the wisdom of his opinion about the hill-men and Turks.

He told the envoys of hill-men and Turks that he would evacuate the fort if the armies first allow the removal of his precious property. They at once agreed and assured the Guru of their promises made.

Then the Guru asked his men to fill the sacks with old shoes, torn clothes and other rubbish material. The sacks which were covered with beautiful brocade, were loaded on the backs of bullocks which were forced out of the fort at mid night. Flambeau with long handles were tied to the horns of the bullocks, so that those might be seen from a long distance. When the animals reached near the army they at once fell upon them to loot the (so called) precious property. But when they touched the foul smelling rubbish they felt ashamed.

The Sikhs also learnt the lesson that the hill-men and Turks could not be believed.

Then a letter came from Aurangzeb, "I swear by Quran and by prophet Mohammad not to harm you. Cease warfare and come to me."

At last circumstances compelled the Guru to evacuate the fort. Bhai Gurbax Singh Udaasi was made incharge of the fort. The articles which could not be taken away, were burnt. The manuscripts and other literary books were the important property to be taken along with.

When every thing was ready the party left the fort at midnight on the sixth of Poh, 1761 Bk. (20th December, 1704 A.D.) At the time of departure the Guru had with him five hundred Sikhs, his family and five Beloved Ones.

They proceeded towards Ropar. That mid night of the month of Poh was dark and bitterly cold. It had been also been raining and a hard cold wind also began to blow. When the Turks came to know that the Guru had left, they forgot all their oaths and chased the Guru. The Guru proceeded towards Ropar via Keeratpur and Nirmoh Garh.

But when they reached the bank of Sirsa they found the stream was in flood. Baba Ajit Singh was asked to stop the progress of the enemy and the rest crossed the Sirsa. When the advanced party crossed the stream, Baba Ajit Singh and his fellows also plunged into the stream and soon they joined the Guru.

In this typhoon and over flow of water the Guru's mother and his two

younger sons got separated from the main party. The Guru along with his trusted Sikhs, his two elder sons, Baba Ajit Singh and Baba Jujhar Singh and five Beloved Ones proceeded towards Chamkaur. On reaching there they occupied a mud-built house. It was situated on a high place and was in the shape of a small fort.

BATTLE OF CHAMKAUR SAHIB

The Guru entrenched the mud-built house. His army consisted of only forty trusted Sikhs, his weapons of offence and defence were those which he and his Sikhs had arranged to bring with them. His provisions consisted of the little that he could procure in the interval between his arrival and the arrival of Royal armies. This was the situation under which the mud-built fort of Guru Gobind Singh was made ready to face the royal armies. The Guru asked his eight Sikhs of guard each wall, two were posted at the gate and two were directed to keep watch. The Guru himself, with his few Sikhs and two sons, held the top storey.

At mid night the Mughal army rushed up and surrounded the village. Next morning a part of army advanced to capture the small fort. But when they approached near the fort a valley of bullet and arrows greeted them.

Then next party advanced, they also met the same fate. The generals were astonished to see such unexpected destruction. Bewildered at there reverse, general Nahar Khan decided to scale the wall, but Guru's one arrow despatched him to the next world. Then general Gani Khan rushed to jump over the wall, but the gold tipped arrow of Guru pierced into his chest. Another general



Khawaja Mardud saved himself by hiding behind a wall. The Guru was killing the selected and haughty soldiers of the enemy.

At last the Mughal army decided to break through the gate of the fort. But as they tried to rush forth in that direction the Guru despatched a Jatha of five Sikhs to face them. They fought very bravely and killed a large number of Mughal soldiers. Being few in number at last they were over powered and killed. Then the Guru sent an other batch and they also faced the attackers valiantly. Then Baba Ajit Singh stood up with folded hands and requested the Guru for permission to go out and to face the enemy in the next attack. The Guru embraced and kissed his son and permitted him to go out side. Five Sikhs accompanied him. They all fought very bravely but how long six of them with stand hundreds and thousands? They sacrificed their lives for the true cause. In the next batch Baba Jujhar Singh fought as bravely as his brother had done. He also died fighting to the last.

It was night by now. The Mughal army lay down to take rest. Then the Guru had five Sikhs left with him. They took counsel together and requested Guru to leave the fort. The Guru obeyed their command and left the fort with three other Sikhs- Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharm Singh and Bhai Maan Singh. Two Sikhs Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh were left in the fort. The plume of Guru was put on the head of Bhai Sangat Singh whose face greatly resembled the face of the Guru.

Walking on thorns and pebbles on the way the Guru reached Machhiwara. There he lay down to take rest. Other three Sikhs also accompanied him.

UCH DA PEER

At Machhiwara the Guru and his three Sikhs stayed in the house of Bhai Gulaba. He was very anxious to serve them but was also afraid of the Muslim rulers. At night Gulaba locked them on the upper storey of his house. But next morning he requested the Guru to take his departure. The Guru was ready to go, but before departure he wanted to see an old lady Gurdevi. The old lady was very much pleased to see the Guru and presented him a big piece of *khaddar* cloth.

There also lived two Rohilla Pathans-Gani Khan and Nabi Khan. They were horse traders and they had sold many horses to the Guru. When they heard about the Guru, they were moved to tears and they decided to help the Guru. They dyed that *khaddar* blue and prepared robes and dresses as worn by a sect of Muslim saints. Guru and his three Sikhs dressed themselves in these clothes

and let their long hair fall down their shoulders.

Disguising themselves in that way, the Guru sat on a litter and it was lifted by Gani Khan, Nabi Khan, Maan Singh and Dharm Singh. Bhai Daya Singh waved a '*chaur*' over him. In that way they were escorting the Uch da Peer. On the way no body questioned them and they travelled on safely. They reached Hehar village in Ludhiana district and there they met Udaasi Mahant Kirpal, who had killed Hayat Khan in the battle of Bhangani. From Hehar the Guru moved to Jatpura and staying there for some time they proceeded to Raikot. There he stayed with Rae kalha who was a rich and influential Muslim Jat of Rai Kot. He served the Guru with loving hospitality. The Guru asked him to send a messenger to Sirhind to find out what had happened to his mother and two younger children. He sent Noora to Sirhind, who came back within a short time, Noora told them that two younger sons of Guru had been martyred by Nawab of Sirhind and Mata Gujri when heard this news she had also flown after them to their Divine Abode. On hearing this news the Guru closed his eyes and after some secret communion with the God said, "I am happy they have conquered the death and have become immortal."



THE EPISTLE OF VICTORY

From Rae Kalha, the Guru went to Dina Kangar. Here he met three brothers Shamira, Lakhmira and Takhat Mal, who were grandsons of Bhai Jodha Rae, who was a devoted Sikh of sixth Guru Sri Hargobind Sahib. They welcomed the Guru and were ready to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the Guru.

The Guru stayed peacefully for a long time at Dina. When the Sikhs of Malwa and Majha heard about the safe arrival of the Guru at Dina, they flocked around him. Within few months a large army of the Sikhs was ready to face the enemy.

At Dina, the Guru wrote the letter Zafarnama or the Epistle of Victory. Addressing this letter to Aurangzeb, he wrote, "I have not even a bit of confidence in you. Your generals and ministers are all false. What could forty men do, when millions attacked them unawares. I was forced to engage in the combat, when all other means fail, it is lawful to have recourse to the sword."

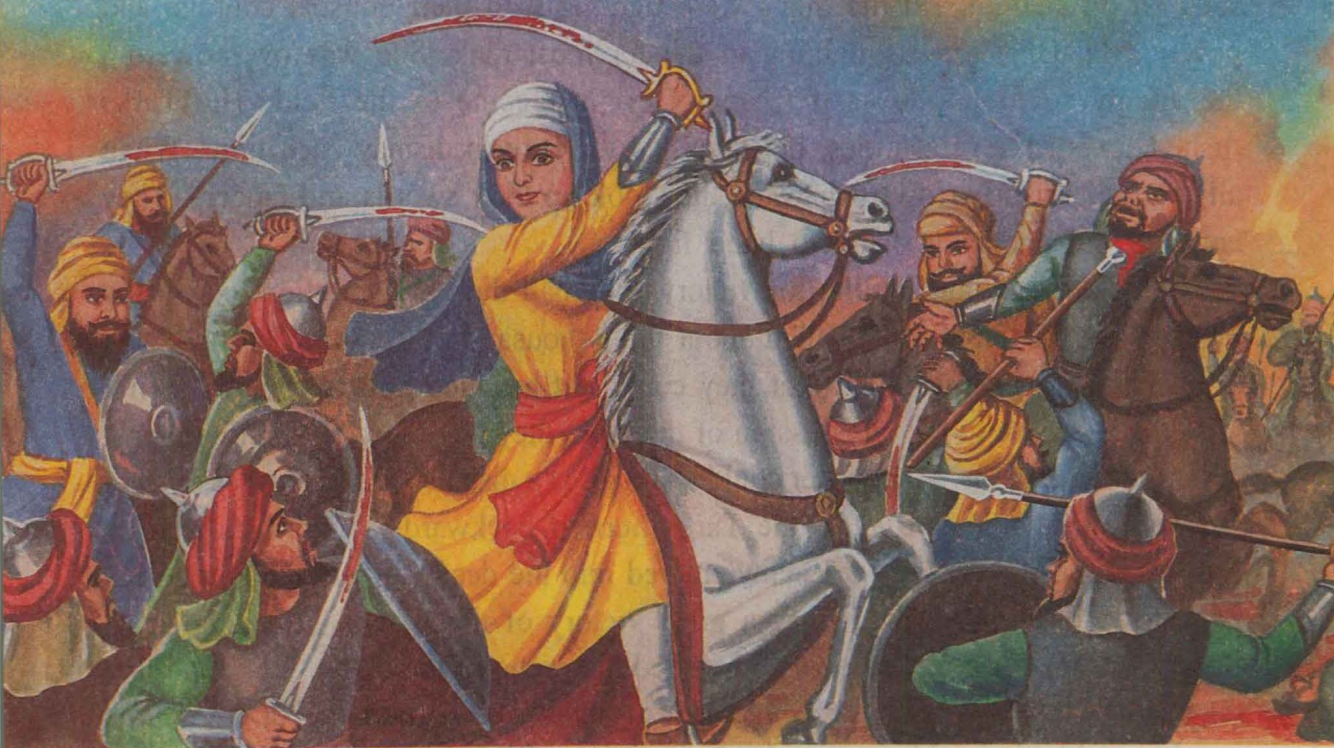
He further wrote, "when you swore by Mohammad and called the word of God as a witness, then it was a binding on you to observe that oath. Every body should be a man of word. I am a slave of God and ready to obey His orders with my life. What though my four sons have been killed, but coiled cobra still remains. The hillmen were against me, because they were idol-worshipers and I was an idol-breaker."

This letter was handed over to Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharm Singh, who delivered that letter to Aurangzeb at Ahmad Nagar in the Deccan. This letter of Guru reached Aurangzeb at a time when he was feeling that his end was near. That letter reminded him of his past sins and crimes against the Holyman. The letter softened his heart and moulded his mind to repent on his past misdeeds.

The Emperor treated Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharm Singh with kindness. He wrote to governor of Sirhind and his other generals telling them that the Guru should not be maltreated again and he should be allowed to move any where according to his wishes.

BATTLE OF MUKATSAR

At Dina Kangar, the Guru enrolled many brave soldiers and also collected ammunition and weapons of war. Here he came to know that Nawab of Sirhind was pursuing him. He therefore decided to go into thick jungles where defence would be easier. In the way he stayed at Jalal, Bhagta and several other villages. Wherever he went the people flocked to listen to truthful utterances of the Guru. Arriving at Kot of Kapura (Fortress of Kapura) he found that fortress very suitable to face the enemy. But Kapura did not allow him to use that fortress. Kapura was afraid of the Turks. From there the Guru moved to village Dhilwan. Here he met Bhai Kaula a descendant of Prithi Chand. Bhai Kaula presented a yellow dress to the Guru and requested him to put off the blue robes. The Guru put off the robes and tearing it into pieces threw it into the fire, piece by piece. The Guru was also saying that he was burning the Mughal empire, bit by bit. During this process a piece of blue dress did not fall into the fire, Bhai Maan Singh took that piece and wrapped it round his turban. It is said thus arose the sect of Nihangs, who wear blue dress and use cloth of this colour in their turbans also.



Staying for some time at Dhilwan the Guru moved on to Jaito. Here he was informed that Nawab of Sirhind was chasing him with over five thousand soldiers. Then the Guru took a trusty guide and moved towards natural big pond of Khidraana. They drank water and took some bags of water with them and stifted to shrubby deserts in the southern side of the pond. They were encamping at a higher place and could face the Mughal army safely.

The Guru sent messengers to all areas where his trusted gallant warriors had been living. When the people of Majha received this news they resolved to go to the Guru and to die fighting for him. A Jatha of two thousand armed Singhs under the command of Mai Bhaago of Jhabaal and Bhai Mahan Singh of Sursingh and Bhai Baaz Singh of Meerpur (Patti) started towards the pond of Khidraana.

When they inspected the pond of Khidraana they found that most part of it was dry. They took bath in the dhaab and spread white sheets of *khaddar* and other clothes on the shrubs in order to deceive the enemy that a large number of Sikh army was encamping there.

Under the guidance of Kapura, a large Mohammadan army reached there. Mai Bhaago, Bhai Mahan Singh, Bhai Ram Singh and their associates came out from the shrubs and fell on the royal army. Mughal army was astonished to see such an on slaught. All the Sikhs were fighting with their unusual courage and power. Mai Bhaago was fighting in the foremost rank. She was overpowering the enemy so forcefully as if Chandi Devi had come to the field. The Turks rushed forward several times, but they had to retire in dismay each time. When all the bullets and arrows exhausted they took up their swords and lancers. They engaged the enemy in hand to hand fight.

Singhs were not fighting for victory, they had the only ambition to win the pleasure of the Guru. They Killed about three thousand of Turks.

When the enemy found that they could not advance further and it was not possible for them to take possession of the tank, they were forced to retreat back.

Kapura told them that water could be found at a distance of thirty miles in front and ten miles in the rear. So the Turks hurried backwards. Singhs chaged the Mughal forces, but when the enemy entered into the dense forest Singhs returned back towards the Dhaab. It was a great victory of the Singhs of Majha.

Then the Guru came down and visited the scene of the battle. He found that the Singhs had defeated the Mughal Army and were returning back. A large number of Mughal soldiers were lying dead there. Then he searched the martyred Singhs and then lifting the head of each martyr into his lap and wiping his face,

blessed him. At one place he found Bhai Mahan Singh in a very critical condition. When the Guru lifted his head and placed that into his lap, Bhai Mahan Singh opened his eyes. Seeing the Guru he was filled with supreme joy. The Guru highly praised him and blessing him said, "Now all of you are Muktas (saved ones). You have been delivered from the round of birth and death for ever." Feeling relieved, Bhai Mahan Singh took a long breath and left this mortal world for ever. Those Singhs who had embraced the death bravely were forty in number.

Then the Guru found Mai Bhaago. She was seriously injured and was lying unconscious. The Guru threw some water on her face and her consciousness revived. The Guru told her about the heroic martyrdom of Bhai Mahan Singh. The Guru was very pleased to see the bravery of Mai Bhaago.

The Guru asked his companions to take her away from the battle-field. Her wounds were treated and she became hale and hearty very soon. She took Amrit from the Guru and from Mai Bhaago, became Mai Bhaag Kaur. She always dressed herself in male attire and remained and served the Guru to the end. She



used to guard the Guru's bed along with ten Sikhs. When the Guru took his celestial abode she went to Bidar and lived there to the end of her days. The blade of her lancer still lies as decoration piece on the bed of the Guru and is called Durga, the goddess having eight arms. Other Singhs including Bhai Baaj Singh and Bhai Ram joined the army of the Guru and proceeded with him towards Talwandi.

SRI DAMDAMA SAHIB

The Martyrs of Khidraana were blessed as Muktas and the Guru renamed the pond of Khidraana as Mukatsar or the Pond of Salvation. Every year on the first of Magh the Sikhs from all over the country assemble hear and bathe in the sacred tank.

After passing through several villages the Guru reached Lakhi Jungle. After staying there for few months, the Guru proceeded towards Talwandi Sabo. There lived a disciple of the Guru, named Bhai Dalla. He was a very prominent and a rich fellow. Many villages of that area were under his command.

When the Guru reached there, Bhai Dalla came with four hundred armed men to welcome him. He offered a full equipped horse of a good breed to Guru as a welcome gift.

After taking Amrit, Dalla became a saint-soldier of the Guru. His name was changed to Dall Singh. At that place thousands of Sikhs were taking the holy Amrit daily. The grandeur of the Guru's Darbar was revived again.

The scholar and poets were also assembling around the Guru. Learned Sikhs were flocking round him in large numbers. In a few months Talwandi Sabo became the centre of learning. The Guru called it as Kanshi of Sikhs. In that year the Guru celebrated Hola Mohalla in same splendid manner as he used to arrange at Anandpur Sahib. There Mata Sundari, Mata Sahib Kaur and Bhai Mani Singh came from Delhi to join him.

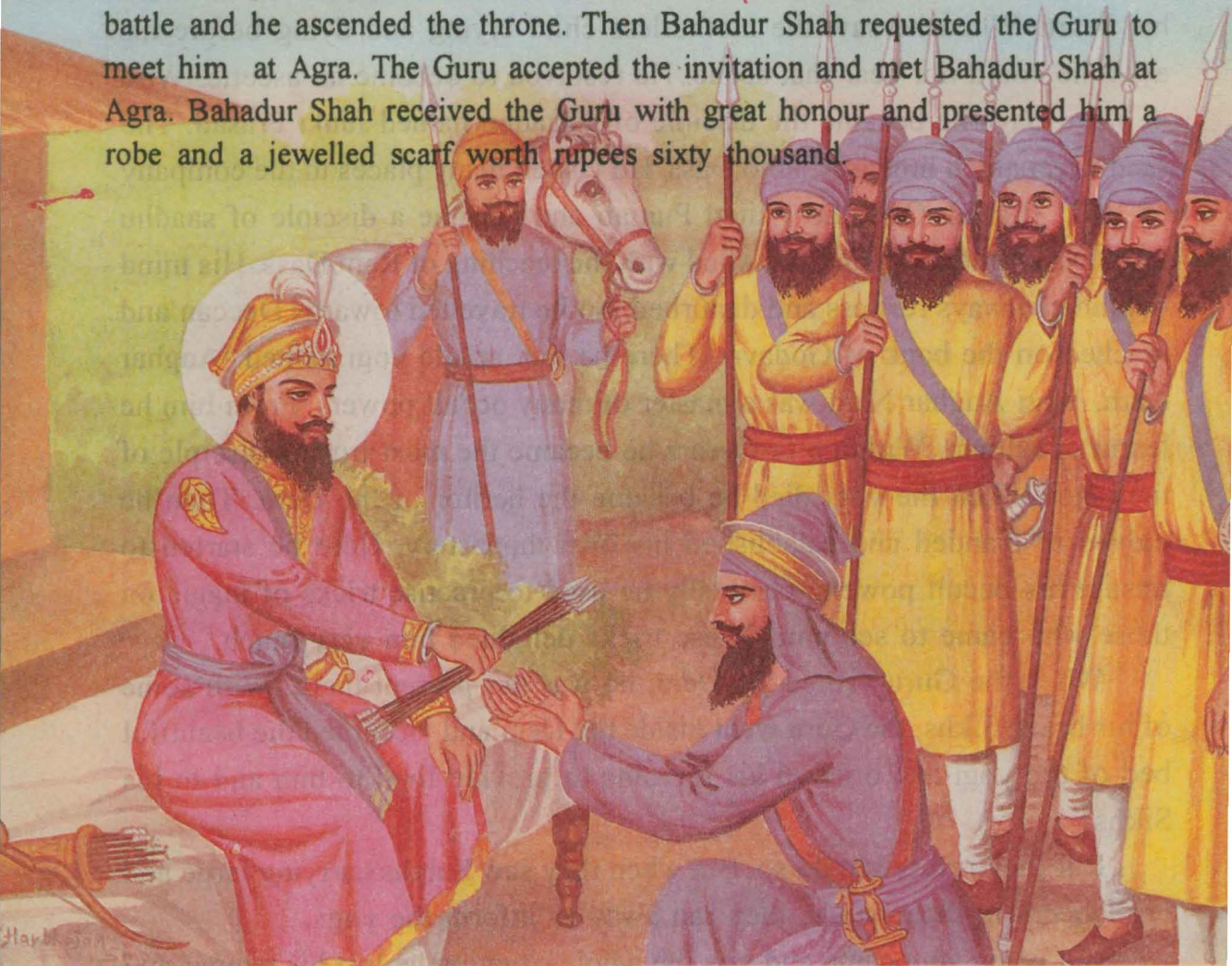
The Guru renamed Talwandi Sabo as Damdama Sahib. There he dictated from his memory the whole of the Guru Granth Sahib and gave it a final form, which is considered to be the most authentic. Bhai Mani Singh wrote the Granth in his own hand writing. The Guru re-edited the Granth Sahib in order to add in it the holy hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur at proper places.

After staying for about nine months at Damdama Sahib the Guru decided to go towards South. Though his disciples requested him to give up the idea of going towards South but the Guru had to accomplish the task assigned to him by God.

Mean while Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharm Singh returned and met the Guru. They informed the Guru of all they had seen and heard. They also informed him about Aurangzeb's last request. The Guru decided to accept the Aurangzeb's last wish and made up his mind to go to Ahmad Nagar but when he reached near Baghpur, he heard the news of the death of Aurangzeb. So he returned back to the North.

When Aurangzeb died, his younger son Mohammad Azim usurped the throne. His elder son Bahadur Shah, who was away in Afganstan rushed back to fight for his father's throne.

When the war of succession started Bahadur Shah sent Bhai Nand Lal to request the Guru to help him. The Guru accepted his request and sent Bhai Dharm Singh along with a Jatha of his chosen saint-soldiers. Bahadur Shah won the battle and he ascended the throne. Then Bahadur Shah requested the Guru to meet him at Agra. The Guru accepted the invitation and met Bahadur Shah at Agra. Bahadur Shah received the Guru with great honour and presented him a robe and a jewelled scarf worth rupees sixty thousand.



BANDA SINGH BAHADUR

Proceeding towards south the Guru reached Nanded. There he met a yogi named Madho Dass. Though his abode situated near the river but actually he belonged to Punjab. He was born on Katik Sudi 13, 1727 Bk, corresponding to October 27, 1670, at Rajauri in the Poonch district of Western Kashmir. The name of his father was Ram Dev, who was Rajput by caste. He named his son as Lachhman Dev. He grew up to be a very brave and gallant young man. He was very fond of hunting. One day when he had gone for hunting he shot down a pregnant she-deer. But when went near the dead animal, he found that an alive child was in her belly. This sight effected his heart. When he saw the motherless child crying and dying before his eyes, he could not bear that scene. He resolved to become an ascetic. With in a few days he became the disciple of a saadhu named Janki Prasad. The saadhu renamed him as Madho Dass. He visited many places in the company of Janki Prasad. Once he visited Punjab and became a disciple of saadhu Ram Dass. But he was not satisfied with the teaching of Ram Dass. His mind remained always restless and disturbed. So he travelled towards Deccan and reached on the bank of Godavri. There he met an old yogi named Aughar Nath. Yogi Aughar Nath was a master of many occult powers. From him he learnt occultism. Within a few years he became the most trusted disciple of the yogi. When the yogi died he became the heritor of the Dera. Then he moved to Nanded and established his own monastery. Here he started to misuse his occult powers. Generally he used to practise tricks of magic on those who came to see him. These tricks delighted him very much.

When the Guru visited his Dera, he was not present there. With some of his brave Sikhs, the Guru went inside the Dera and occupied the beautiful bed of the yogi and ordered his servants to provide food to him and to his Sikhs.

But they refused to do so. But when they saw Singhs carrying large and big lancers in their hands, they ran away to inform the yogi.

But when yogi came and saw the whole situation he lost his temper and crying loudly said, "I will teach him a lesson that how an ordinary man could

dare to sleep on my beautiful couch.” He sat and concentrating his mind, uttered some mantras. He was trying to overturn the sleeping couch. He again applied his utmost strength, but he was not even successful to shake the couch. He spent a long time in uttering mantras and using all powers of magic at his command. At last he gave up his effort and came near the couch, where the Guru was resting.

He said, “Who are you” The Guru replied, “He whom you know very well.” Then he again asked, “Whom do I know? Sitting on the couch the Guru said, “Think it over and think it over again and again, there is no haste.” Then the yogi closed his eyes and began to remember calmly. After a brief pause he said, “Are you Guru Gobind Singh?”

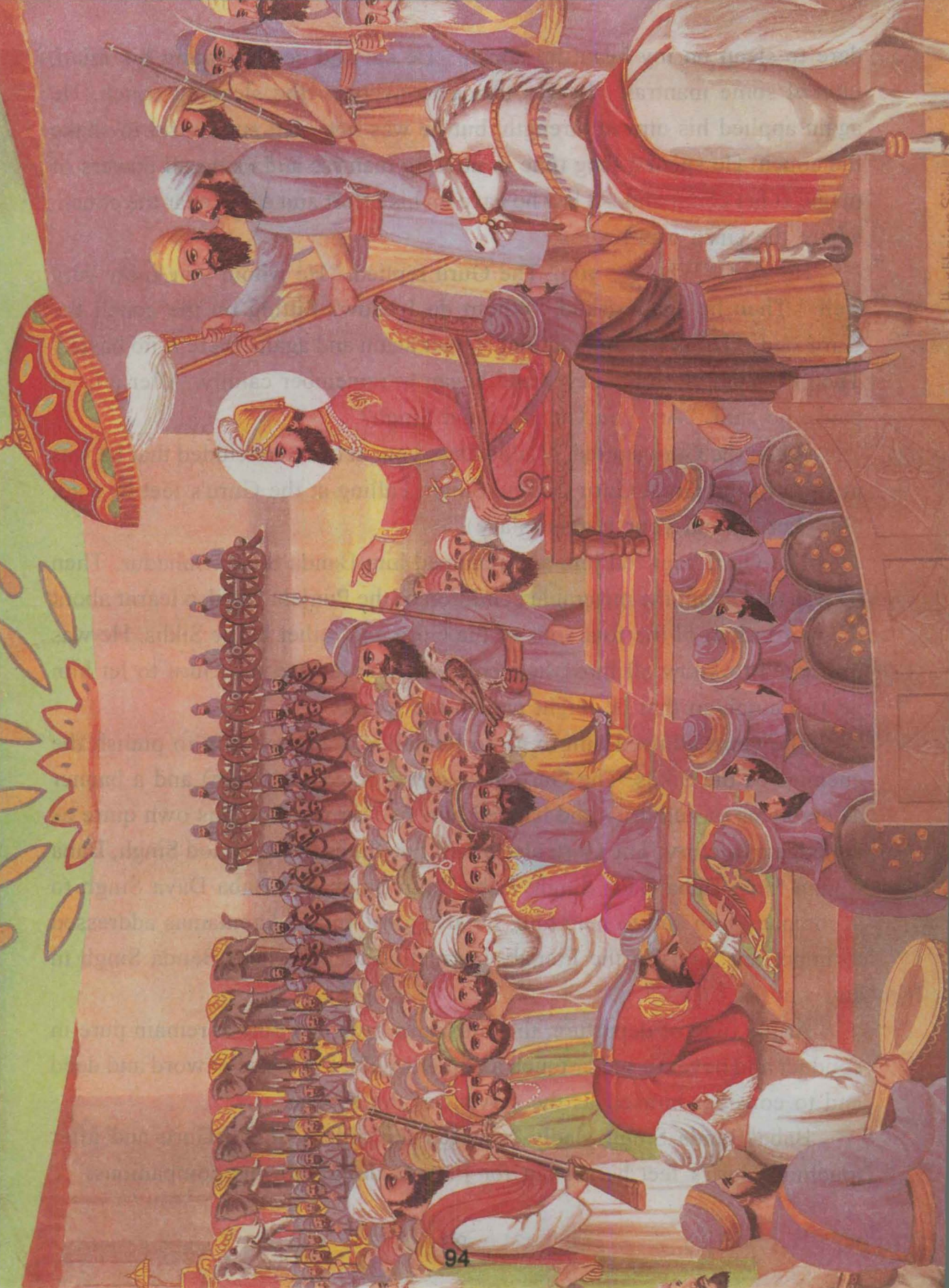
When the Guru smiled, Madho Dass yogi at once concluded that he was in front of the Great Guru Gobind Singh, Falling at the Guru's feet he said, “My Lord! I am your Banda (slave).”

The Guru baptized him and renamed him Banda Singh Bahadur. Then he was told about the miserable condition of the Punjab. He also learnt about the martyrdom of the four sons of the Guru and other brave Sikhs. He was infuriated to know all those happenings. He requested the Guru to let him go to Punjab so that he might punish the tyrants.

The Guru allowed him to go to Punjab and advised him to punish the enemies of the Sikhs. The Guru gave him a Nagaara (Drum) and a banner as emblems of authority and handed him five arrows from his own quire as a pledge of victory. The Guru also asked five Sikhs, Baba Binod Singh, Baba Kahan Sing, Baba Baaz Singh, Baba Rann Singh and Baba Daya Singh to accompany him and to help him; he also gave him Hukamnamas addressed to important Sikhs in the Punjab, instructing them to help Banda Singh in any way.

At the time of departure, the Guru also ordained him to remain pure in conduct and never to see or touch an other's wife; to be true in word and deed and to consider himself as the servant of the Khalsa.

Baba Banda Singh gladly accepted the orders of the Guru and after touching Guru's feet he set out for Punjab along with his companions.



ABCHAL NAGAR HAZOOR SAHIB

The Nawab of Sirhind was much perturbed when he came to know that a concord was going to be established between Emperor and the Guru. The Emperor had shown an obvious inclination to help the Guru. Wazir Khan took it granted that his end was certain. He also knew the style of punishment, which he was going to be awarded. So in order to save himself he devised a plan to end his fears and anxiety. He deputed Jamshed Khan and Gul Mohammad two young Pathans to murder the Guru. Jamshed Khan first went to Delhi and met Mata Sundri. From her he got the where about of the Guru and then they set out for Nanded. When they reached there they found that the Guru had established a new city named as Abchal Nagar. When they attended the Darbar of the Guru, they were astonished to see the splendid grandeur of the Darbar. They had not seen such splendour and magnificence at the darbar of kings. They thought that it was not possible for them to kill him in the Darbar. So they planned to use



some nefarious methods to achieve their target. They showed themselves as the devotees of the Guru and made it a routine to attend the Darbar daily. They were studying the situation and the time that would suit for their deputed work. Soon they became quite familiar with prominent Sikhs of the Guru. The Guru generally used to take rest at noon. One day when they came at noon they found that there were only few Sikhs attending the Guru. Gul Mohammad stayed outside but Jamshed Khan without any hesitation entered the tent of the Guru. At that time the Guru was taking rest and a Sikh was attending.

Entering inside Jamshed Khan bowed before the couch of the Guru and sat their in obeisance. When the attendant went out side for some work, Jamshed Khan sprang up to his feet and stabbed the Guru. Before the Guru could get up, the Pathan tried to attack again, but the valiant Guru over took him and severed his head from the body. Gul Mohammad who was sitting out side, tried to escape but the Sikhs caught him and after asking about his mission killed him at the spot.

When they entered the tent they saw the wound of the Guru. They were struck with grief and anxiety. The Guru consoled them and told them that there was nothing to worry. Immediately the wound was washed and sewn. When the emperor came to know about this incident, he sent two English doctors, who sewed the wound and applied proper medicine.

The Guru became hale and hearty very soon. As usual he began to attend the Darbar. One day he asked Bhai Daya Singh to bring five coins and a coconut. At that time musicians were singing the holy hymns. The Guru got up and leaving his throne went before the Granth Sahib. This Granth he had compiled at Damdama Sahib. He bowed before the Granth Sahib and placed five coins and a coconut in front of it. Then he got up and addressing the congregation said,

*The Will of God destined the formation of Khalsa.
This is the final order to all Sikhs to accept Granth Sahib as Guru.
Believe the Guru Granth as the visible body of a present Guru.
Whosoever yearns to seek God shall find it in the Divine Word.
The Khalsa shall rule and there will be none to resist them.*

BOLE SO NIHAL

SAT SRI AKAL